

Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you support the Senate's draft proposal to grant long-term alien workers status similar to that of Freely Associated States' citizens?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE



Fallen Star

He was a rising star in Congress at lunchtime—and out of office by dinner.

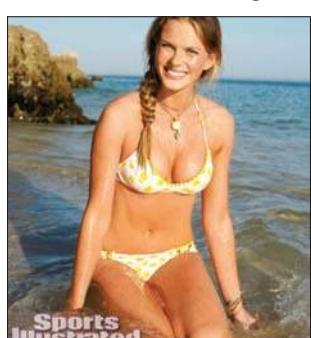
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Defiant Mubarak

The mood in Tahrir Square was exultant. Then euphoria turned to fury.

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Ka-Ching

The Sports Illustrated Swimsuit edition isn't just about sexy to fashion designers.

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Proposed FAS-like status drawing opposing views



'THANK YOU, DELTA'

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) and other senators join Delta Air Lines Inc. officials led by visiting managing director for Pacific Sales and Affairs Jeffrey S. Bernier and Australia, Micronesia and Philippines general manager Steven Crowdy in a group photo, after the Senate presented a resolution to Delta Air Lines, expressing gratitude for its continued direct flights from Japan to the CNMI. Sen. Ralph Torres (R-Saipan), seventh from left, author of the resolution, says Delta Air Lines is a faithful partner in the CNMI's tourism industry.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Private, public sectors come together

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Unpredictable changes to laws, lack of enforcement of laws and rules that include those on taxation and littering, alien labor status after the expiration of

umbrella permits in November 2011, and continuous access to the Chinese and Russian tourism markets were just a few of the major issues that private sector representatives yesterday said need to be addressed to improve the CNMI's investment climate.

They also offered solutions that they hope the private sector and the government will work on—from complex to simple ones, such as reducing what they described as an exorbitant \$200 fine for littering that has made it unenforceable.

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Final number of NMC prexy candidates: 31

» **ACCT to select top 7 candidates; interviews next week**

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Association of Community College Trustee clarified yesterday that 31 and not 28 candidates have submitted

their application for the presidency of the Northern Marianas College.

In a statement to the *Saipan Tribune*, the Presidential Search Committee said the total number of applicants were finalized by ACCT and relayed to panel members during yesterday's meeting.

"The total number of presidential applicants, 31, slightly varies from what

See FINAL on Page 4

Bill amending smoking law heads to Fitial

» **Froilan's last-minute amendment plan stirs debate**

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

A bill that will increase from 20 to 30 percent the number of designated smoking rooms in hotels now heads to Gov.

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Worker groups are not giving up hope that the U.S. Congress will grant U.S. citizenship or permanent resident status to lawful long-term foreign workers in the CNMI, rather than the Freely Associated States-like status that the CNMI Senate wants to propose.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan, who held a teleconference with local senators yesterday morning, doubted that Congress will accept the CNMI Senate's revised draft recommendation that allows long-term foreign workers to apply for a FAS-like status only by 2013.

The Senate's revised draft proposal applies only to non-resident workers who have been legally residing in the CNMI for at least 10 years by May 2008, but they have to wait for five more years or until 2013 to become eligible to apply for a FAS-like status.

Previously, senators proposed that these foreign workers who have been here for at least 10 years by the date the federalization law was signed in May 2008 should be eligible to apply for a status similar to those granted to FAS citizens.

FAS citizens can freely travel, work, and study in the U.S. and its territories. They are those from Palau, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia's Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae and Yap.

Senate Vice President Jude Hofsch

See FAS-LIKE on Page 4

Bill amending smoking law heads to Fitial

Benigno R. Fitial for enactment.

The House and Senate passed House Bill 17-37, Senate Substitute 1, Senate Draft 2, House Substitute 1 during sessions held hours apart yesterday.

Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) had tried to increase the number to 80 percent but this was met with strong resistance by his colleagues.

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Ranking Air Force officials take in Tinian sights. PAGE 2
Competition for customers lead to beating, shovel attack. PAGE 3

Local

Ranking Air Force officials take in Tinian sights

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

Two ranking officers of the U.S. Air Force, along with six other officials, recently visited the island of Tinian and met with its municipal leaders.

Tinian Mayor Ramon M.

Dela Cruz said Gen. Raymond E. Johns Jr. and Brig. Gen. Samuel D. Cox led the team of Air Force officials who arrived for a familiarization on board two Navy Seahawk helicopters at West Tinian Airfield last Feb. 3 after a brief stopover on Saipan.

Dela Cruz was joined by mili-

tary liaison officer Joe Kiyoshi, Department Public Safety director for Tinian Ray Pangelinan, and historian Don Farrell in welcoming the Air Force officials upon their arrival.

The mayor and his team gave the visiting officials a tour of the North Field's Runway Able,

Atomic Bomb Pits 1 & 2, USS Indianapolis Monument, Invasion Beach, Tinian Harbor, and the Tinian Taga House Park.

According to Dela Cruz, it was Johns' first time to visit Tinian while Cox had been to the island once for a brief stopover.

The Tinian mayor was

pleased that the U.S. Air Force acknowledges the island's vital role in the impending military buildup.

"The military buildup is an exciting topic of discussion and I told them about the urgency of including the island of Tinian in these talks," Dela Cruz told *Saipan Tribune* during the book launching event of *History of the Mariana Islands to Partition* Thursday at the Aqua Resort Club.

Dela Cruz believes that Tinian's participation in the relocation

of more than 8,000 Marines and their dependents from Okinawa to Guam, which would involve the construction of military facilities, would stimulate the island's declining economy.

"But everything is so uncertain at this point and the officials told me that it's up to the upper management. Funding remains the biggest concern," said the Tinian mayor.

After the tour, the Air Force officials headed back to West Tinian Airport to fly back to Guam.

Man paid \$15K in advance ups and leaves after just six days with CUC

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A man hired for a management position at the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. was paid an advance of \$15,504 but, after working for only six days, returned to Texas and never came back to Saipan.

As a result, CUC reportedly incurred \$28,155.85 in total damages as the agency had also provided David P. Preston a roundtrip airfare ticket, car rental, and hotel accommodations.

CUC is now suing Preston in the Superior Court for breach of contract to recover damages. CUC asked the court to immediately issue an order barring Preston from touching or withdrawing any remaining money that may still be in his bank account in the CNMI.

CUC counsel S. Joshua Berger stated in the complaint that CUC entered into a management position employment contract with Preston on Oct. 21, 2010.

Berger said after working

Military training on FDM, Warning Area-517

SANTA RITA, GUAM—The U.S. military will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla on the following dates and times:

- Feb. 14-16, from 7:30am-7:30pm
- Feb. 17, from 8am-7:30pm
- Feb. 18, from 7am-7:30pm
- Feb. 21-25, from 9am-7:30pm

The military will conduct training at Warning Area 517 on the following dates and times:

- Feb. 15, from 11:45am-5:30pm
- Feb. 16, from 11:45am-4:30pm

The public—especially fisherman, commercial pilots, and marine tour operators—are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10-nautical mile

for six days at CUC, Preston returned to Texas allegedly to pack up his belongings and return on Dec. 22, 2010, with his family.

While in Texas, Preston requested as an "advance" for relocation expenses for himself and his family of four, Berger said.

The lawyer said CUC granted the defendant's \$15,504 "advance" request.

Berger said this money was transferred into a local First Hawaiian Bank account in Preston's name.

Indeed, Berger said, CUC reserved an airline ticket for the entire family, after it had already made two wire transfers into Preston's First Hawaiian Bank account in the CNMI.

Berger said Preston failed to arrive on the designated date, and there has been no communication from him since the latter part of December 2010.

"Defendant is therefore in breach of his employment contract with plaintiff for the full amount to him or used for his benefit," he said.

Farallon de Medinilla plays a special and unique role in national defense because its location provides access frequency that supports established training requirements. In addition, the air and sea space in the Farallon provides sufficient room for the many different attack profiles necessary to replicate training opportunities in the CNMI.

W-517 is an irregular shaped polygon comprising of 14,000 nautical square miles of airspace that begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. It supports surface and aerial gunnery, missiles, and laser exercises. This will affect fishing in the vicinity of Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Bank.

For more information, contact the Joint Region Marianas Public Affairs Office. (PR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The delegation of Gen. Raymond E. Johns Jr. (USAF) and Brig. Gen. Samuel D. Cox is joined by Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz during the group's visit to Tinian for a familiarization tour. The group is seen here posing at the North Field Runway Able.

Parents urged to adopt national PTA goals

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan encouraged members and officers of the parents-teachers-school associations of the Public School System yesterday to consider adopting the goals of the national parents teachers' association.

Sablan said it is her goal this year to see parents become a member of the national association so they could be more informed about parenting and public education issues that would guide them in their decision-making.

"I want them to really look at the national standards—PTA. It's really about parental involvement in school, about communicating, volunteering, and collaborating. These are some of the things that I urged them to be part of the system," said Sablan.

Yesterday's PTA summit held at the Tanapag Elementary School saw the attendance of about 100 parents from Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Sablan first identified parental involvement and community partnership as the fifth strategic



MONETH G. DEPOSA

Participants in the PTA forum listen to a speaker during discussions yesterday at the Tanapag Elementary School. About a hundred parents from Saipan, Rota, and Tinian graced the event, which aims to build strong collaboration between parents and the system.

PTSA advisory council also helped PSS build a successful relationship with parents.

Like teachers and staff, parents on three islands now get to undergo professional development workshops and sessions.

According to Therese Hizon, PTSO president for Rota High School, parental involvement on her island has dramatically increased in the last two years.

"We're seeing now the clear direction and goals for our stu-

dents. We're becoming more aware and involved because we know what to expect and what is expected of us as parents," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

PTSA vice president Shirlin Harjani of Tinian Elementary School said she's happy that her voice is now being recognized by the school system. "For me, I feel I am being heard, they acknowledge me and they appreciate the PTSA on whatever input they may have. In essence, we're proud that we're now part of the decision-making for our students."

According to PTSA Advisory Council president Juan Sablan, also the San Vicente PTSO president, parents are aware now of important issues about the school system—from activities to financials, to the system's ultimate plans for the students.

Sablan said the council will continue to collaborate with Sablan to ensure that both are working on the same goals and objectives for public schools.

Other presenters in yesterday's summit included PSS finance director Richard Waldo; PSS legal counsel Kelly Butcher; and federal programs officer Tim Thornburgh.

Senate confirms Tinian appointees to CDA, MPLT board

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The full Senate confirmed the governor's nominees to the Commonwealth Development Authority and the Marianas Public Land Trust boards, just a few hours after holding a public hearing on these nominations yesterday.

The Senate confirmed the appointments of Peter Q. Cruz to the MPLT board of trustees, and Nathan M. Quichocho to the CDA board of directors.

They both represent Tinian on the MPLT and CDA boards.

During the Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Governmental Investigations' public hearing yesterday morning, all of those who came forward testified in favor of the nominees.

Senate EAGI Committee vice chair Sen. Juan Ayuyu (Ind-Rota) presided in the public hearing because the chairman, Sen. Frank Cruz (R-

Villagomez gets more time to respond to NMPASI lawsuit

The Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems Inc. has reached an agreement with the Office of the Attorney General to give Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin P. Villagomez and Commonwealth Health Center medical records technician Melissa Sablan more time to respond to NMPASI's lawsuit.

NMPASI counsel Jeanne H. Rayphand and assistant attorney general David Lochabay, counsel for Villagomez and Sablan, agreed to extend until March 31, 2011, the date for Villagomez and Sablan to answer NMPASI's allegations.

NMPSI alleged that Villagomez and Sablan refused to provide the agency access to records of a certain patient who



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

From left, Marianas Public Land Trust board nominee Peter Q. Cruz, Senate floor leader Pete Reyes (R-Saipan), Commonwealth Development Authority board nominee Nathan M. Quichocho, Senate Vice President Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian), Sen. Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota) and Sen. Juan Ayuyu (Ind-Rota) at the Senate session yesterday.

Tinian), is the brother of one of the nominees and a relative of the second one.

During the Senate session yesterday afternoon, Cruz also abstained from voting on the confirmation of the two nominees. He cited conflict of interest.

The EAGI Committee will also conduct a public hearing on Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's re-appointments of Jose Lifoifoi

and Barry Toves to the Commonwealth Ports Authority board of directors on Tuesday, Feb. 15, at 10am.

The committee will also

hold a public hearing on the appointment of Eric Plinske to serve on the Civil Service Commission on Feb. 22, Tuesday, at 10am.

Competition for customers lead to beating, shovel attack

A police officer has expressed concern about the competition for tourist customers at a beach in Garapan that recently led to a beating and shovel attack.

"This kind of offense and behavior should not be tolerated especially in front of visiting tourists to our island," said detective Peter A. Aldan in his declaration filed in the Superior Court.

Roland Kapileo and Nores S. Langu were arrested for assault with a dangerous weapon, assault and battery, and disturbing the peace. Bail was set at \$5,000 cash each.

Victim Norris Osiik Omengkar had told officers that he was pumping air into a banana boat for four tourists Saturday morning when Kapileo and Langu confronted him for allegedly stealing their customers.

Langu allegedly took a shovel and hit Omengkar with it. Kapileo then allegedly punched the victim on the nose thrice.

The victim ran off until he saw a patrol officer and flagged him down in front of Remington Night Club in Garapan to report the incident. (Ferdie de la Torre)

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3 villages now enjoy uninterrupted water service

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Residents of three villages on Saipan now enjoy uninterrupted water service after the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. completed the repair and replacement of defective pipes that were causing major leaks.

CUC customers in San Roque, Achugao, upper Tanapag areas, as well as some parts of San Vicente now have 24-hour water service. Service also improved in the southern part of San Vicente, from two-hour water service to the current 12 hours.

CUC said it is working toward providing 24-hour water service island-wide by 2012.

Saipan Tribune learned that residents

of San Vicente only had water service last year from 5:30am to 8am, while residents of San Roque, Achugao, and upper Tanapag had water only from 5am to 10am.

According to Mariano Iglesias, manager of CUC's water and wastewater division, they found out that most of the main valves of pipes in San Vicente had leaks and were defective. To improve the service, CUC permanently disconnected the asbestos cement pipes from the distribution system and installed new plastic pipes, valves, and fire hydrants.

In the northern villages, Iglesias said that not only did the residents have limited water service, but inconsistent water pressure as well.

"The water tank or reservoir supply-

ing water to these areas was manually operated daily by water distribution personnel. This unconventional operation of the tank was often met with mainline breakages that resulted in shorter and unannounced water service disruption," he explained.

The water service to northern villages improved with the assistance of James Watts from the Hawaii Rural Water, who was on island to conduct the leak detection training.

Iglesias said there are two types of water pipes in these areas.

"The newly installed pipe is plastic. The older pipe is metal and is still active. Some of the older pipes were constructed in swampy and heavily vegetated areas that made it difficult to spot or detect leaks. The CUC Repair

and Sewer Collection personnel, along with Watts, used an audio listening device that picks up leak noises from pipes and pressure gauges to find the leaks," he said.

According to Iglesias, a major leak was found in a heavily vegetated area near the Tanapag Elementary School.

FINAL

From Page 1

was earlier announced. Based on information that the ACCT provided to PSC chair Andrew Orsini, the committee had last week indicated that there were a total of 28 applications received by the Jan. 15, 2011, deadline. However, that number was corrected to 31 by ACCT in a subsequent meeting with the Orsini later in the week," the statement said.

Orsini that they are very glad to see that many individuals throughout the country have demonstrated their interest in the important position.

"Now it is time to move forward to the next stage of the selection process so the appointment of the next president of the college can be made without unnecessary delay," Orsini told *Saipan Tribune*.

Orsini's committee aims to select the most qualified candidate within the month.

Of the 31 applicants, the association will transmit the top seven candidates

He said this leak was the cause of the loss of pressure and insufficient water supply to the school and the surrounding residential areas.

CUC earlier said that for every 10 gallons of pumped water, only four to five gallons are being billed while the rest is considered a loss.

who best meet ACCT's standards, criteria, and qualifications.

"The PSC anticipates that the interview of the seven candidates advanced by the ACCT will occur by late next week, depending upon the availability of the candidates given the time differences, and may continue until the following week until completed," said Orsini, adding that the committee will use Skype or other videoconferencing tools to interview off-island applicants.

The search panel reviewed and finalized yesterday the questions that will be posed to the top seven applicants.

Besides Orsini, the other members of the PSC include David Sablan, president, Century Insurance Co.; John Oliver Gonzales, executive director, Joeten-Kiyu Public Library and NMC alumnus; Jesus Elameto, retiree and former PSS administrator; Juanita Mendiola, former Tinian Municipal Council chair; Barbara Mersalen, dean, NMC Academic Programs and Services; and Antonio Tipes, president, Associated Students of the Northern Marianas College.

BILL

From Page 1

In the 20-member House, the bill passed by a vote of 16-1, with Tenorio the only one voting "no," while three were absent.

The nine-member Senate later passed it on a 9-0 vote.

Sen. Luis Crisostimo (D-Saipan), author of the bill, said he's thankful for his colleagues for supporting a measure that balances the concerns of the health sector and the tourism sector.

He said he merged his bill with that of Tenorio, with the exception of the percentage that Tenorio wanted—80 percent. While Tenorio's bill passed the House, the Senate chose to act on Crisostimo's revised bill.

During the House session yesterday,

Tenorio offered to amend the latest version of the bill to increase the number of smoking-designated rooms to 80 percent, from the current law's 20 percent.

"As Section 1 of the bill points out, many if not most of our visitors are smokers. When the 30 percent of smoking rooms are full, are we supposed to turn them away while many of the 70 percent of nonsmoking rooms are vacant?" Tenorio said in his written proposed amendment.

The former governor and speaker said visitors should be made to make their own decisions about their health.

"We cannot be the smoke police to the world," Tenorio added.

House minority leader Diego T. Benavente (R-Saipan) and most minority members opposed Tenorio's proposal.

He found allies, however, in Rep.

Ray Palacios (Cov-Saipan) and Rep. Ramon Basa (Cov-Saipan) who supported the former speaker's proposed amendment. Tenorio ended up withdrawing his proposed amendment, with only a few of members poised to support his proposal.

The bill that goes to Fitial allows up to 30 percent of hotel and motel rooms that are rented to guests to be designated as smoking rooms. The attached balconies of such smoking-designated rooms may also be so designated.

Tina Sablan, a health advocate, said while the number of smoking-designated rooms increased to 30 percent, or 10 percent more than the 20 percent that current law allows, "it is still a step backward" in the efforts to prevent and stop smoking for health reasons.

nized disenfranchisement of a segment of society, an extremely offensive, un-American and undemocratic proposal for long-term foreign workers," she said.

The CNMI Senate is also proposing that the CNMI House support their recommendation to Congress.

Hofsneider said the Senate looks forward to having the recommendation a "joint position paper" of the CNMI Senate and House for more weight.

House floor leader George Camacho (Ind-Saipan) said the entire House has not fully discussed this issue.

"I am certain that we will soon. Should the consensus of the House be similar to that of the Senate, I see no reason why we cannot adopt the Senate report as one body of the Legislature," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Rep. Fred Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), chairman of the Federal and Foreign Relations Committee, participated in the Senate public hearings last year as well as the Senate's meeting on Thursday when they revised the recommendation.

"The final hearings on Saipan, Tinian and Rota will determine the final context of the Senate report. In the meantime, I will discuss with the speaker and the leadership the possibility of making this a joint effort between the Senate and the House," he said.

The latest round of public hearings will be held on:

- Rota: Friday, February 18th, 6:00pm at the Rota Roundhouse
- Saipan: Thursday February Feb. 24th, 6:00pm, at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe
- Tinian: Friday, February 25th, 6:00pm at the cafeteria of Tinian Elementary School.

FAS-LIKE

From Page 1

neider (R-Tinian), chairman of the Committee on Federal Relations and Independent Agencies, said that Sablan brought up new issues during their teleconference.

Sablan said one of the biggest concerns right now is the separation of alien workers from their immediate relatives whose umbrella permits expire in November 2011. He said he thinks Congress will not accept the CNMI Senate's latest draft recommendation.

But senators and other House members are saying that granting a FAS-like status to eligible nonresident workers has the least impact on the resident population.

Still, others like Gov. Benigno R. Fitial oppose granting any improved immigration status to foreign workers.

The governor, who will be leaving for Washington, D.C. on Feb. 22, wants to only extend the so-called umbrella permits beyond the expiration date of November 2011.

By 2014, the foreign worker population on whom the CNMI economy is dependent upon is supposed to be reduced to zero unless something is worked out about their immigration status.

Rene Reyes, president of the Marianas Advocates for Humanitarian Affairs Ltd. or Mahal, said they will be calling on all their members and supporters to come out in the scheduled public hearings to oppose the revised Senate recommendation.

"We are not supporting the Senate's revised recommendation," Reyes told *Saipan Tribune*.

Reyes said Mahal would have sup-

ported a FAS-like status if the U.S. Department of the Interior didn't include in its recommendations to Congress to allow foreign workers who have been in the CNMI for at least five years to be conferred U.S. citizenship, or permanent residency leading to citizenship. Included in the five options is the FAS status that the CNMI Senate is planning to recommend to Congress.

Rabby Syed, president of the United Workers Movement-NMI, said they continue to push for U.S. citizenship or permanent resident status, commonly referred to as "green card."

Hofsneider reiterated that their recommendation remains a draft, and will become final only after taking comments from the last round of public hearings on Feb. 18, 24 and 25.

This early, worker groups are mobilizing their members to attend the hearings.

Hofsneider's committee held public hearings on the Interior report from June to August 2010. These hearings were the basis for the Senate's draft proposal.

He said the Senate will be providing their final report to Delegate Sablan and other members of Congress.

Florida-based human rights advocate Wendy Doromal, in her blog "Unheard No More," wrote: "I believe that all law-abiding long-term nonresident workers who have lived and worked for five or more years in the CNMI or anywhere on U.S. soil should be eligible to apply for a green card with an unobstructed pathway to U.S. citizenship. (So do over 7,000 CNMI residents and nonresidents who signed a 2009 petition.)"

"I consider any lesser status as an unacceptable alternative. In fact, I find FAS status, which is the legally recog-

PRIVATE

From Page 1

These helped sum up the Investor-Friendly Working Group Conference that the Office of the Attorney General hosted at the Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio yesterday from 8:45am to past 4pm.

Attorney General Ed Buckingham said all the issues and solutions identified during the session would be shared with and followed up with concerned government agencies and private sector representatives.

He said the purpose of the working group conference, as the governor had also said in his remarks, is to bring together the private and public sectors to share information and identify ways to improve the business climate, "recognizing that government isn't going to be the center of job creation; it's going to be the private sector."

Douglas Brennan, president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, said he is hoping that positive things will come out of the conference.

"We've been through these exercises 20 or 30 times. The difference in this one, the catalyst is the Attorney General's Office. And as such, we were hoping that we do get the ear of those up the Hill and that they take the time to listen to what's going on. The private sector is where the revenue comes from," he told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview after the conference.

The Chamber of Commerce is the largest business organization in the CNMI with some 150 members.

Brennan, who is also the secretary of the Commonwealth Auto Dealers Association and general manager of Micro Corp., identified top three issues he personally would like to see addressed immediately.

These are: equitable enforcement of current laws, reduction in the cost of living, and a part-time legislature as opposed to the current full-time, 29-member legislature.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, in his remarks, said the conference is not about highlighting mistakes and misfortune, but about identifying real issues and most importantly, creating real solutions.

"One thing is clear. A government solution to current economic issues is entirely insufficient. Real change, and with it real prosperity, will only come from a healthy and happy private sector," he said. The Legislature hosted a similar working session a few weeks ago.

Fitial said yesterday's conference will not solve the current economic problems, but by working together, the private and public sectors can identify issues that need to focus on, identify the key actors to solving the issues, and identify the first concrete step to take together.

Prior to the closed-door conference, private sector representatives identified issues that they feel are major impediments to a vibrant economy. On the day of the conference, the participants chose 17 items.

These included Article 12 or land alienation, tax structure, the environment, permit processing, zoning, uncertain labor market, high utility rates, poor enforcement of loitering and littering laws as well as building code, feral cats and dogs, and transportation infrastructure.

The participants were then divided into five groups and identified solutions to each of the problem areas identified.

Reporters were invited to attend only the last portion of the conference, when groups shared their proposed solutions to the problems, and the lead individuals or agencies to work on the problems identified.

One of the participants lauded Buckingham for "opening the doors" to free discussion on the issues and solutions to economic problems.

Participants exceeded 50 in the morning, but the crowd got thinner in the afternoon.

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos and businessman Robert Jones were keynote speakers.

Inos: Submit budget plans before Feb. 28

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos said yesterday that government agencies need to submit their individual budgets for fiscal year 2012 before the previously set deadline of Feb. 28.

He said this will give the Office of Management and Budget more time to review the figures and meet with each agency before the governor's required submission deadline to the Legislature by April 1.

"The Office of Management and Budget is asking for accel-

erated submission rather than wait until the 28th because if everybody submit on the 28th, we will only have one month to put it together," Inos told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview at a book launching at Aqua Resort Club yesterday morning.

Inos, who oversees govern-

ment finances and is a former Finance secretary, said in some cases, OMB may have to hold internal hearings with individual agencies.

For fiscal year 2012, agencies are required to include in their budget calculations government contributions, such as health

insurance, life insurance at 2 percent, Retirement Fund-Defined Benefit Plan at 30 percent, Retirement Fund-Defined Contribution Plan at 4 percent, and Medicare at 1.45 percent.

While collections improved in January, Inos said the CNMI government is not out of the woods yet.

In fiscal year 2011, the CNMI government partially shut down for almost two weeks after the Legislature failed to pass a budget before the Oct. 1 deadline set by law. The fiscal year 2011 budget is capped at \$132 million, and the administration may also submit a similar

amount for 2012. Vicky Villagomez, the governor's special assistant for management and budget, sent out a Jan. 5 letter to all agencies, marking the start of the Fitial administration's budget call for fiscal year 2012, which will start on Oct. 1.

She urged agencies to formulate their budget and spending plans with the concept of "doing more with less in a less vibrant economy by rightsizing areas of operations not affecting delivery of basic public services, consolidating programs that are related, and eliminating programs that are duplicative."

Company obtains TRO vs Finance over refusal of tax offsets

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A company was able to obtain a temporary restraining order that prevents the Department of Finance from refusing its tax credits or tax offsets as assigned by Marine Revitalization Corp.

Robert O'Connor, lawyer for Sun & Surf Ltd., told *Saipan Tribune* Wednesday that Superior Court associate judge Ramona V. Manglona had granted their TRO request against Finance.

O'Connor, however, explained that there is no pending hearing in the case as the parties are discussing ways to resolve the issue.

Sun & Surf sought a TRO and preliminary injunction to require Finance to recognize the validity of the tax credits that the company purchased from MRC pursuant to a valid and outstanding Superior Court order in MRC's lawsuit against the Department of Lands and Natural Resources.

DLNR agreed in 2005 to a court judgment ordering it to pay \$5.65 million to MRC. DLNR, however, did not comply with the order, resulting in the court's three judgments in

favor of MRC.

In October 2010, MRC president Anthony Pellegrino told the Legislature that the government's debt to the company has ballooned to \$8.5 million. Pellegrino established MRC to build the \$3.5 million Outer Cove Marina in the mid-'90s.

In Sun & Surf's complaint, O'Connor said the Superior Court authorized MRC in February 2009 to assign portions of its judgment to third parties as dollar-for-dollar tax offsets. O'Connor said the government appealed the order, but did not ask for a stay.

Between April 2009 and May 2010, MRC transferred tax offsets to various person and entities that used them to pay their tax liabilities to the government.

On April 28, 2010, Sun & Surf took an assignment of \$44,664 worth of tax offsets and used the tax offsets to pay its 1st Quarter Business Gross Revenue Tax to Finance.

O'Connor said on June 25, 2010—16 months after the order was issued—the government asked the Superior Court for a stay on the order.

On June 28, 2010, after the Superior Court denied the stay motion, the government brought

an emergency motion before the CNMI Supreme Court to stay the third order. Two days later, the Supreme Court granted the motion to stay.

The Supreme Court cited the CNMI's dire economy as the main justification and stated that should the tax offset mechanism authorized by the Superior Court be overturned on appeal, that the "bell cannot be un-rung."

On Dec. 10, 2010, Finance issued a notice and demand for payment, claiming that Sun & Surf was delinquent in its amount of the MRC tax offset that Sun & Surf used to pay its taxes. Finance also assessed penalties and interest on the "delinquent" amount.

O'Connor said on Dec. 13, 2010, Michael Ernest of the Office of the Attorney General issued a memorandum to Finance disallowing the use of the MRC tax offsets.

O'Connor said Ernest stated that "the Commonwealth Supreme Court has issued a stay... and thus, Finance is without authority to accept the tax credits or tax offsets."

The lawyer said Finance used this memo as justification for

its refusal to renew the business license of another company, D&C Corp., which had also used the tax credits assigned from MRC to pay its BGRT tax liability for the first quarter of 2010 and before the stay was issued by the Supreme Court.

O'Connor said in Dec. 14, 2010, the Supreme Court issued a ruling affirming in part and reversing in part the order. Among the parts that were reversed was the use of the MRC tax credits.

O'Connor said that Finance "invalidated" the MRC tax credits purchased and used by Sun & Surf to pay its first quarter 2010 BGRT tax liability while the third order was a valid, outstanding order, not subject to a stay.

O'Connor said the Supreme Court invalidated the method by which MRC had been collecting its judgment—tax offsets—but it did not invalidate the judgment itself, and it did not order MRC or its assignees to return amounts already collected.

Friday, Feb. 11, 2011 was designated on the calendar as World Day of Prayer for the Sick. In order to provide greater participation in this global effort, the Diocese of Chalan will observe this celebration on Sunday, Feb. 13, 2011, in a Mass at 3pm at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa, Saipan. All are invited to participate in this Healing Mass.

The Diocese is now host to the International Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima until Feb. 22, 2011. With the presence of her image, the time is opportune for community members to gather in prayer and request for the Blessed Mother's intercession in the gift of healing. The image will be present at the Healing Mass on Feb. 13, 2011, and all the faithful are invited to participate in the celebration.

Parishioners suffering from or are affected with an illness are most welcome to attend and join in the Sacrament of Holy Anointing to take place at this Mass. (PR)

Palau soil survey available online

HONOLULU, Hawaii—Do you know if the soil beneath you is appropriate for farming, building, or living? Residents in the Republic of Palau now have access to the recently updated Soil Survey of the Islands of Palau via the Internet.

This soil survey contains information that affects land use planning in Palau. It contains predictions of soil behavior, highlights soil limitations, improvements needed to overcome the limitations, and the impact of selected land uses on the Palau area. Designed for farmers, foresters, and agronomists to evaluate the potential of the soil and the management needed for sustainable food and fiber production. Planners, community officials, engineers, developers, builders, and home buyers can use the survey to plan land use, select sites for construction, and identify special practices needed to ensure proper performance.

ON THE NET

http://soils.usda.gov/survey/online_surveys/pacific_basin/PB935/palauCD.pdf.

control can use the survey to help them understand, protect, and enhance the environment. This soil survey is helpful to others because great differences in soil properties can occur within short distances. Some soils are seasonally wet or subject to flooding while some are shallow to bedrock. It is important to know where some areas

are unstable to be used as a foundation for buildings or roads, poorly suited to use as septic tank absorption, or poorly suited to basements or underground installations.

"This document is an accumulation of years of study and research and we are pleased to make this information available to the public," said Lawrence T. Yamamoto, NRCS director for the Pacific Islands Area.

A general soil map shows the survey area divided into groups of associated soils called soil map units. These maps are useful in planning the use and management of large areas. To find information about your area of interest on the detailed soil maps, locate that area on the in-

dex to map sheets, click on the map sheet of interest, identify the number of the map unit in the area of interest, then refer to the detailed map unit description for a general description of the soils in your area.

The manuscript, which was recently completed, was done in cooperation with the Republic of Palau, which includes the Palau Natural Resources Council, the Ministry of Resources and Development, the Palau Community College Cooperative Research and Extension Service, the Environmental Quality Protection Board, the National Emergency Management Office, the Palau Automated Land and Resource Information System, the Bureau of Arts and Culture, and the Palau Conservation Society. Compact discs with the same information as on the internet will be available before long. A Geographic Information System soils layer will also be made available. Assistance in using the soil survey can be obtained through the NRCS Palau Field Office located in Airai.

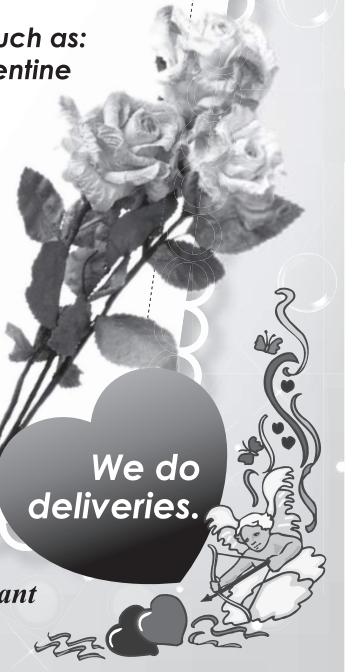
Viewers can browse through over 400 pages of data and maps by going to http://soils.usda.gov/survey/online_surveys/pacific_basin/PB935/palauCD.pdf. (USDA)

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Opinion

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EDITORIAL

Must there be an app for everything?

(c) 2011, The Dallas Morning News

The American breakfast table caricature once pictured a husband, nose in newspaper, mumbling “uh-huh” to spousal questions.

The updated caricature consists of two spouses plus kids, noses in cellphones, thumbs on keyboards, taking turns mumbling “uh-huh” across the table.

No longer in touch with only workplaces or heartthrobs, they are hunched in front of their smart phones as though peering through the sole portal to the world. They are checking news flashes, movie reviews, ESPN, airfares, homework assignments, church bulletins, restaurant menus, store hours and celebrity tweets; they are consulting calorie counters, home remedies, Pete Delkus and the Food Network; they are playing games and the stock market. All are updating Facebook.

They might be missing out on something—each other, perhaps—but it’s hard to know. There’s not an app for that yet.

Interconnectedness—boon and bane. It saves time and costs time. It gets in the way of things and paves the way for things. There’s no excuse for getting stuck in traffic—get an app for that!—and there’s no excuse for missing the boss’ surprise deadline, either.

Now the highly virulent iPhone contagion is spreading apps to millions more through a new model being sold for the first time outside the AT&T realm. Rival Verizon’s iPhone hits stores this week, along with claims about performance similar to how Detroit would brag about its cars.

The publication Macworld writes about the new iPhone model’s “fit and finish” as if it were indeed a car. That’s somehow fitting, because of the places the phone can take people, each app adding horsepower.

Other phone systems may have more market share or have edged ahead of Apple’s iPhone, but none can match the cultish following.

Comic Jon Stewart speaks about fellow iPhoners as a “community” whose members like to “carry around every photo we’ve ever taken and every song we’ve ever listened to.”

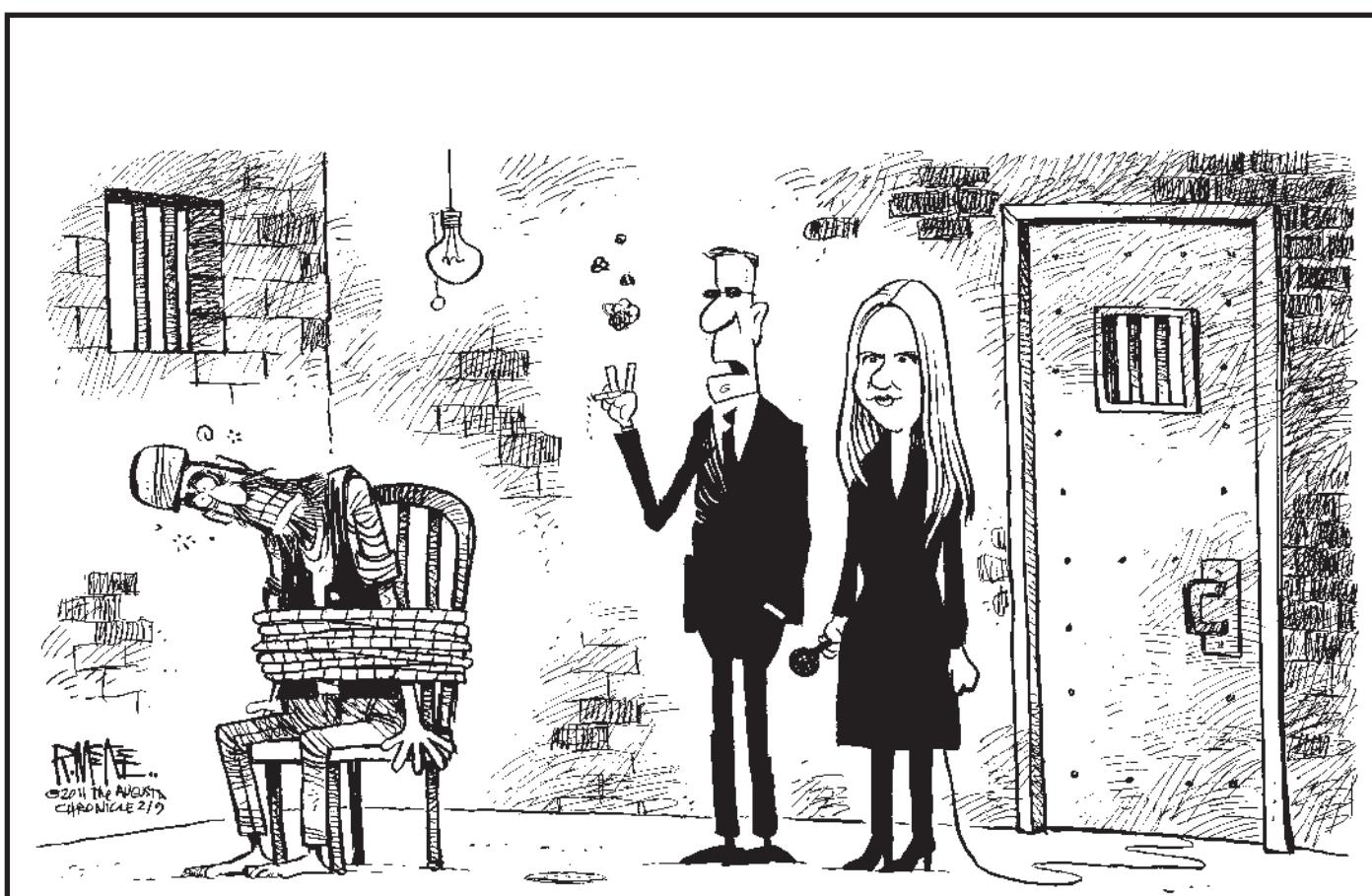
Android users could also boast about excesses, performance and pixels, but there’s not the same esprit de corps for a phone system that sounds more like an insect than a companion for your purse or pocket.

Whatever the product, the seductiveness is potentially the same, and some people say there ought to be a law to protect us from ourselves. Really?

Exhibit A is the woman famous for falling into a fountain at a shopping mall while texting (search YouTube “fountain lady”). Research from Ohio State University found an uptick in emergency room visits from texters who fell, tripped or ran into things.

Should there be a law?

How about an app instead? For people who can’t take their eyes off their little i-screens long enough to watch their feet hit the ground, iTypet2Go superimposes the texter’s typing over a camera’s-eye view of the terrain ahead.



"SO, WILL YOU TALK NOW OR SHALL I HAVE CHRISTINA AGUILERA SING THE 'STAR-SPANGLED BANNER' AGAIN...?"

Beware the Islamists in the wings

From the American perspective, the transition now underway in Egypt confirms John Kenneth Galbraith’s famous appraisal of politics as a choice between “the disastrous and the unpalatable.”

What the Obama administration must dread is not the prospect of Cairo repeating the disaster that was Tehran in 1979 but St. Petersburg in 1917, when one revolution—its leadership democratic but hopelessly divided—was followed within months by a second, its leaders murderously disciplined and malevolently focused. In other words, will Mohamed ElBaradei or some other liberal reformer ultimately play Kerensky to some as-yet-obscure Islamist strongman when the Muslim Brotherhood seizes power, as the Bolsheviks did from the parliamentary democracy to which the czar handed power when he abdicated?

That possibility arises because a democratic or more broadly based Egyptian government inevitably is going to include the Muslim Brotherhood, which was founded in 1928 and is the world’s oldest and largest Islamist organization. History suggests that political liberalization, no matter who wins it, sets off its own revolution of rising expectations. And whoever succeeds Hosni Mubarak will have a hellish time satisfying the needs of a country where more than 30 million people live on \$2 a day or less, and where the population includes more unemployed university graduates than any other in the world.

Moreover, since decolonization, secular Arab regimes haven’t excelled at much but repression. That makes a focused organization like the Muslim Brotherhood, with its twin appeals to folk piety and populist politics, not simply a ready alternative but the only one. The handful of scholars who’ve studied the Muslim Brotherhood agree that the organization contains both hard-line Islamists and more flexible “reformers,” though they’re divided on which faction predominates.

Take, for example, the Brotherhood’s claim of rejecting violence while supporting attacks on Israel. Palestinian terrorism, it insists, isn’t violence but “resistance.”

Some analysts have compared the Brotherhood’s latest iteration to the West’s Christian Democratic parties, but that simply doesn’t wash. No Christian Democrat ever has claimed that the party’s creed is the only legitimate organizing principle for every aspect of personal, communal and political life, as the Muslim Brotherhood has for more than 80 years. Nor has any Christian Democratic party ever made the transnational claims the Brotherhood does—it’s ultimate goal being the restoration of an Islamic caliphate stretching from the South China Sea to the Pyrenees.

There’s also no looking away from the fact that the Brotherhood

By TIM RUTTEN

Los Angeles Times



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isn’t just committed to the Palestinian cause or hostile to political Zionism, which it has been since its founding. It’s a thoroughly anti-Semitic organization that has actively distributed Arab-language editions of “The Protocols of the Elders of Zion” and actively collaborated with the Nazis during World War II. It also advocates discrimination against women and believes that non-Muslims should not be allowed to hold office.

Finally, we can’t ignore the fact that in the two places where offshoots of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood have managed to gain political power—Hamas in the Gaza Strip and the wretched cabal in Sudan—the results have been both bloody and disastrous.

As uncertain and fraught with danger as the prospects may be, there also are facts on the ground that not even the most committed of the Brotherhood’s hard men will be able to ignore. One is that, for all the political window dressing with which Mubarak has surrounded himself, Egypt is—as it has been since Gamal Abdel Nasser—a military dictatorship. The army and its economic interests are woven throughout the fabric of the country’s society, and the generals aren’t likely to sit in their villas and watch all that swept away for the sake of Sharia.

What would follow from a military coup wouldn’t be pleasant for the Egyptian people, but neither would the imposition of an Islamic regime.

There’s also the hard reality that Egypt can’t feed itself; it is the world’s largest importer of grain, much of which it pays for with aid from the United States. That’s leverage. So too is the fact that the Egyptian army no longer is in a position to threaten our closest ally in the region, Israel, because we equip Cairo’s forces, and they couldn’t fight a war without being resupplied.

The United States has found a way to maintain close relations with the hard-line Islamic fundamentalist regime in Saudi Arabia and with the “soft” Islamists now in power in Turkey. It won’t be easy or comfortable, but we probably can find a similar accommodation with Egypt—particularly because there isn’t any choice.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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What turmoil in the Middle East means to Americans

By RICHARD PARKER

MCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Seven thousand miles from the protesters, politics and turmoil of Tahrir Square in downtown Cairo, why should Americans care about the dramatic events there?

The usual reasons have all been offered: Egypt's peace treaty with Israel, Egypt's geopolitical importance astride the Suez Canal, a universal interest in democracy and human rights, the fact that the country is home to the 10th-largest military in the world, one in which Americans have invested billions of dollars. But there is another reason that is at least, if not more, important.

The political change stirring in the Middle East also portends a period of instability in the region and around the world as the prices of food and oil collide. The rapid growth of China and India, their need for limited resources, means pressure in poor and less developed areas like the Middle East—and beyond. This, in turn, spells trouble for the global economic and political system; once more globalization is proving how volatile it really is.

First, the impetus behind the uproar in Egypt certainly has democratic elements—but it would not have caught popular support were it not for the economic privation of the country. Talk of Twitter and Facebook aside, nearly 30 percent of 80 million Egyptians are illiterate. Yet every single one of them has to eat, and in the month before protests broke out, food prices rose steadily in Egypt for seven straight months, according to the United Nations. Even the price of gasoline in Egypt, once a net exporter, rose so that it was hard even to get to work.

Second, these trends are confined neither to Egypt nor the Middle

Obama on a good run, but traps may await him

President Barack Obama has had a good few weeks, but political perils lie ahead.

The bipartisan tax-cut extension boosted both the economy and his approval level. His expression of national grief over the Tucson shootings drew almost universal praise. His 2011 agenda sought both common ground and contrasts with opposition Republicans.

Obama also has carefully walked a difficult line in coping with Egypt's governmental crisis, simultaneously pursuing potentially incompatible goals of greater democracy and continued strong ties with a longtime U.S. ally.

But lest his strategists grow complacent, the least of these issues contain ticking time bombs that could pose significant political problems at inopportune moments for his 2012 re-election bid:

The Egyptian situation remains perilous, and the fallout could create even greater dangers throughout the volatile Middle East.

The two-year extension of the Bush tax cuts means Obama and Congress will have to cope with the issue again, right before the 2012 balloting.

The health reform law is headed for a Supreme Court showdown that could undercut implementation of Obama's most cherished achievement.

From the start, Egypt's uprisings presented a dilemma with no easy answers and only limited U.S. leverage.

Underscoring that difficulty has been the contrast between last week's perception that Obama was pushing President Hosni

Building a safer America

During his trip to Michigan on Thursday, the president announced the Wireless Innovation and Infrastructure Initiative. It will, for the first time, allow first responders to build a reliable communication network that takes advantage of the same technology that my grandkids use on their smartphones, while making high-speed wireless services available to millions of Americans in rural areas.

Here's how it will work: We will dedicate a part of the airwaves (called "spectrum"), which are what smartphones and other high-speed mobile devices use to communicate, to public safety for a high-speed wireless network that will reach across the country. When we auction licenses to use the airwaves, we will dedicate a part of that income to help public safety build this network.

Another part of those auction proceeds will go for research and development that will benefit everyone who uses wireless technology—so that this country will not only have the fastest networks but also the best wireless technologies for public safety, education, health care, transportation and energy.

A nationwide high-speed wireless public safety network like this is long overdue.

This year is the 10th anniversary of one of the greatest tragedies

East. The countries in the region now experiencing turmoil are, like Egypt, not the major oil exporters. They are instead the hangers-on among the regional economies: Tunisia, Algeria, Jordan and Yemen. After a protracted slump in oil prices after the 2008 recession, prices began a steep rise late last year because oil production was flat while demand for food—shipped around the world—rose.

The collision of food prices and oil prices is now rippling not just through the Middle East but across the globe. A U.N. index of global food prices showed them jumping 25 percent worldwide in 2010. Much of that increase was fueled not just by crop failures but by relentless demand from the growing Indian and Chinese economies.

Mubarak aside, the Egyptian regime, dominated by the military and including 10,000 ruling elites, isn't just going to surrender power to protesters in the street. Make no mistake: the rising role of the military means its overt return to Egyptian politics to maintain the stability of the regime it created in a 1952 coup. The military is an important institution in society, providing upward mobility and it maintains vast interests in the economy, according to studies by the U.S. Army: in industry, agriculture and infrastructure. It will guard these interests.

Other regimes are likely to follow suit and negotiate protracted political transformations that ease pressure from the situation while preserving as much power as possible. This will, in turn, continue to inject risk into global oil prices. The risk in other areas of the Middle East, however, is that many lack strong institutions upon which to fall back during a transition, like Egypt's military. The monarchy in Saudi Arabia, for instance, has no effective backstop. In a similar situation it could be forced to crack down on its own people or effectively collapse.

Food prices for the poor in places like Egypt—and for every-

one—are only likely to rise because of the now inextricably intertwined global economy. One forecast predicts that China will import 8 million metric tons of corn, and that amount may nearly double by 2015. Despite daily fluctuations, crude oil may climb this year to \$100 per barrel, Goldman Sachs predicted at the end of 2010, even before the fall of the Tunisian government or the Cairo protests.

So what does this mean to Americans? It means that the unpredictability and volatility of a globalized economic and political system will probably continue to threaten the normal and predictable course of events—as well as everyday life. Prices will rise, even as the economy struggles to lift itself into a real recovery, even as people struggle to find jobs. The poor around the world will find some conditions too much to continue to bear and they will lash out.

Don't forget: The first 10 years of this century have been marked by nothing but turmoil as the global economic and political system has proven trickier to manage than anyone envisioned 20 years ago. The decade opened with the attacks of Sept. 11, ensuing global financial panic, American-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, slumping financial markets, oil price shocks and finally the financial collapse and the 2008 recession.

It should come as no surprise, then, that at the annual meeting of the world's super-elites in Davos, Switzerland, global instability emerged as the largest concern among bankers, politicians and business leaders. It's a pity that not a one of them, or any leader anywhere, seems capable of taming this beast.

Richard Parker is a former defense correspondent for Knight Ridder Newspapers and is the former associate publisher of The New Republic. Kavi Williams contributed to this article.

By CARL LEUBSDORF

The Dallas Morning News



Carl P. Leubsdorf is the former Washington bureau chief of the Dallas Morning News. Readers may write to him via e-mail at: carl.p.leubsdorf@gmail.com.

to the health law, which the Supreme Court could well decide in spring 2012. Besides challenging the constitutionality of requiring all Americans to buy health insurance, which helps finance the law's benefits, the lawsuits are spurring newly elected Republican critics in many states to resist full implementation.

A court decision barring the individual mandate would force the administration to seek revisions, presumably from a Congress in which Republicans control the House and can prevent action in the Senate.

The provision does not kick in until 2014, so the result might depend on the 2012 election. A Republican victory could doom the law, but even Obama's re-election wouldn't necessarily settle matters, since Republicans could well hold at least one house, if not both.

Either way, the issue that bedeviled the Democrats in 2010 could do so again next year, though the implementation of some benefits and an expanded electorate could produce a different electoral outcome.

By JOE BIDEN

McClatchy-Tribune News Service



Joe Biden is the vice president of the United States.

schematics onto their devices to find the best routes to safety. A police officer will be able to quickly determine if the car in the traffic stop is stolen or if the driver has an outstanding warrant. EMTs will be able to transmit pictures from an accident scene ahead to doctors in the emergency room. Lives will, quite simply, be saved.

This is an unprecedented investment in the brave men and women who put themselves in danger so the rest of us can be safe. Giving them the tools they need to do their jobs successfully is simply the least we can do for them, for our communities, and for an entire nation that depends on them so immensely.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.pr.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 5 to 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

▲ 85° ▾ 77°

▲ 86° ▾ 77°

▲ 86° ▾ 77°

▲ 86° ▾ 77°

▲ 86° ▾ 77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota Thundershowers	▲ 84 ▾ 77
Palau Thunderstorms	▲ 86 ▾ 76
Yap Thunderstorms	▲ 86 ▾ 77
Chuuk Rain	▲ 82 ▾ 76
Pohnpei Showers	▲ 86 ▾ 76
Kosrae Thunderstorms	▲ 86 ▾ 78
Majuro Thunderstorms	▲ 85 ▾ 76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲ 75 ▾ 67
Beijing	Snow	▲ 36 ▾ 18
Hong Kong	Showers	▲ 57 ▾ 45
Honolulu	Showers	▲ 76 ▾ 67
London	Showers	▲ 50 ▾ 39
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲ 77 ▾ 47
Manila	Thundershowers	▲ 84 ▾ 72
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲ 69 ▾ 56
Miami	Showers	▲ 72 ▾ 57
New York	Flurries	▲ 41 ▾ 29
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲ 43 ▾ 34
Paris	Showers	▲ 50 ▾ 35
Pusan	Cloudy	▲ 42 ▾ 27
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲ 60 ▾ 42
Salem	Showers	▲ 51 ▾ 46
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲ 66 ▾ 46
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲ 31 ▾ 18
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲ 45 ▾ 35
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲ 46 ▾ 32

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
3:07 AM	Today	High Tide: 1.4 Feet
7:13 AM	Today	Low Tide: 1.2 Feet
1:01 PM	Today	High Tide: 1.8 Feet
9:02 PM	Today	Low Tide: 0.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:43 AM	6:20 PM	Today	12:12 PM	12:49 AM
Sunday	6:43 AM	6:20 PM	Sunday	1:14 PM	1:43 AM
Monday	6:42 AM	6:20 PM	Monday	2:11 PM	2:39 AM
Tuesday	6:42 AM	6:21 PM	Tuesday	3:11 PM	3:34 AM
Wednesday	6:41 AM	6:21 PM	Wednesday	4:13 PM	4:28 AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

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ISLAND SNAPSHOT

Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.

BUSINESS

Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.

SAMUT SARI

Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.

TRAVELOGUE

Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 16, 2010

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM				GUAM-SAIPAN			
C09317 4:25am 5:15am Daily				C09316 2:45am 3:35am Daily			
C09313 7:55am 8:45am 3, 6				C09596 6:35am 7:25am 3, 6			
C09313 8:30am 9:20am 1, 2, 4, 5, 7				C09596 7:00am 7:50am 1, 2, 4, 5, 7			
C09601 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7				C09600 10:05am 10:55am 1, 2, 4, 5, 7			
C09603 3:05pm 3:55pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7				C09602 1:40pm 2:30pm 1, 4, 5, 7			
C09605 6:20pm 7:10pm Daily				C09604 5:00pm 5:50pm Daily			
C09599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily				C09606 8:00pm 8:50pm Daily			
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL287 6:10am 8:45am Daily				DL298 10:25am 3:05pm Daily			
DL285 6:40am 9:15am 1, 3, 4, 5, 6				DL286 7:45pm 12:20am+1 2, 3, 4, 5, 7			
DL297 4:35pm 7:15pm Daily				DL288 8:00pm 12:30am+1 Daily			
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)				OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN			

SCHEDULE OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral

Sunday Mass: 6am Chamorro, 9am English, 11am Filipino and 6pm English
Monday-Saturday: 6am Chamorro
Wednesday: 6pm Chamorro
Parish office hours:
Monday-Saturday
8am-12pm, 12-1pm, 1-5pm

Korean Center

Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish

Sunday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm (PH Novena 5:45pm)
Friday: 5:30pm praying of Divine Mercy Chaplet; 6pm devotional mass in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
Saturday: 6am and 6pm (anticipated)
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am 6pm Tagalog mass
Parish office hours: (Fr. Celso G. Magbanua) Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 8-11:30am / 3-5:30pm, Wednesday and Friday 3-5pm.
Telephone no. 285-0273

Santa Soledad Mission Parish

Monday: 6pm
Tuesday: 6pm
Wednesday: 6pm
Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 6pm (Youth mass/ anticipated Sunday mass)
Sunday: 7am and 9am (Children's mass)
Parish office hours: Wednesday and Friday: 8-10am,
Saturday: 4-6pm
Telephone no. 256-4568

Saint Jude Parish

Monday-Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 7am
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Parish office hours: Monday-Friday 9:30-11:30am, 3:30-5pm
Office is close every Thursday and Saturday
Telephone no. 288-0007

San Antonio Parish

Monday-Friday 6pm
Saturday: 6pm
Sunday: 7am, 9am (Blessing of children)
Parish office hours: Tuesday-Saturday: 8-11:30am, 2-4:45pm
Close on Sunday and Monday

San Francisco de Borja-Rota

Sunday: 6am Chamorro, 8am English Monday and Tuesday: 6am Chamorro Wednesday: 6pm English Thursday: 6am Chamorro Friday: 6am English Saturday: 6am Chamorro, 6pm Tagalog Sunday: anticipated mass

San Isidro-Rota

Sunday: 5am, 8am, 10am
Monday-Friday: 7pm
Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish

Monday-Saturday: 6am daily mass
Monday-Sunday: 3pm Divine Mercy Chaplet
Wednesday: 6pm, mass, exposition of the blessed sacrament
Saturday: 6pm, anticipated Sunday mass
Sunday: 7:30-9am English, 6pm Tagalog mass
Office hours: Monday-Wednesday: 9am-12pm, 2-5pm
Thursday: day off
Friday-Saturday: 8am-12pm, 2-5pm
Telephone no. 234-6991

San Roque Parish

Sunday: 7:30am Chamorro, 9am English
Monday: 6pm English
Tuesday: 6pm English
Wednesday: 6pm English- novena mass to our Lady of San Roque oil
Thursday: 6pm English

PROTESTANT

Friday: 6pm English- Devotion to the sacred heart of Jesus (First Fridays)
Saturday: 6am English- Our Lady's Saturday mass for the intentions of the Men and Women in military service, 6pm English- anticipated mass
Parish office hours: daily except Thursday and Sundays: 4:30-6pm
Telephone no. 322-2404, Fr. Bong's cell: 285-912, Diocesan Finance office: 234-3000 ext.143

San Vicente Parish

Monday-Friday: 6pm,
Saturday: 6pm (First Saturday of every month)
Sunday: 6am anticipated mass, 6pm (Neo Catechumenal community mass), 8pm
Sunday: 6am, 9am, 6pm
Parish office hours: daily 9-11am
Telephone no. 235-8208 or 287-0131

Santa Remedios

Sunday: 8am
Monday: 6pm (1st Mondays cemetery masses at 5:30pm)
Tuesday-Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 6pm-anticipated Sunday mass 8-10pm
Parish office hours: Monday-Friday: 8:30am-12pm

Born Again Christian

(Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8:10-30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8:10-30pm Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan

Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm
Telephone no. 234-6026/27

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan

Worship Services:
Sunday: Chinese and Filipino 9am, English 6pm
Bible Study: Wednesday and Saturday 8pm
Telephone no. 235-8540

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan

Morning Service, Sunday, 10:00 am
Evening Service, Sunday, 6:00 pm
Children Sunday School, 10:00am/ 6:00 pm
Prayer Meeting, Wednesday, 7-9 pm
Youth Night of Worship, Friday, 6:30 pm
As Perdido Road
Chalan Piao, Saipan MP 96950
Tel. No. (670) 235-8590
Email: cornerstone@cfemcares.org

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau, Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan

Sunday Worship Service: 9-11am
Sunday school/ Children's church 9am (nursery available during Sunday service)
GBC Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: 6am Tuesday GCA Kagman, Wednesday Navy Hill, Thursday San Antonio

Home Cell Bible Study: 7pm (Through out the week)
Telephone no. 322-5680

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan

Wednesday: 7:45pm (English)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (Tagalog)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)

Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church

Chalan Kanoa Drive, Chalan Kanoa (east of Town Center and Beach Road, Near Mt. Carmel Cathedral)
Worship Service: 9:00am
Children's Sunday School: 9:00am

Choir Practice: 8:00am
Singspiration: 8:30am
Prayer, Care & Share: Wednesday 7:00pm
Pastor: Millie Carroll 322-6158

Immanuel Methodist Church

(Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal 8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group 8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)
(Korean Congregation)
Sunday worship: 9am, 10:30, 1pm
Wednesday evening service: 8pm
Daily morning prayer: 5am

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan

Sunday English Service: 7:30-9am, Sunday Tagalog Service: 9-11am and 6-8pm,
Wednesday: 7:30-9pm

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan

Sunday School: 9:20am
Sunday Adult: 11am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan

Sunday Worship Service: 10am-12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan

English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9:10-30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry

Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church

Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Marianas Bible Fellowship Center

Sunday School: 9:30am
Divine Worship: 9:30-11am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Pentecostal Missionary Church of Christ (4th Watch)

Sunday worship 8:30am
Sunday evening 7:00pm
Prayer meeting, every Wednesday 7:30pm
San Jose village, after San Jose Hotel Telephone: 789-7566

Saipan Christian Church

Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Saturday: 6:30 pm -9pm

Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ

Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 10-11am
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 6-7pm
Thursday Bible Study: 7pm

Saipan Community Church

(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan

(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10:10-40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church Koblerville

Sunday services:
Sunday school 9:00am
Morning worship 10:00am
Evening service 6:00pm
Wednesday evening bible study 7:00pm

Chinese services

Sunday morning 10:00am
Sunday evening 7:00pm

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church.

Telephone No: 285-4661/2

Thy Word Ministries Saipan

Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi

Service Times

Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries

Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Guilo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church

Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship: 10:30am
Sunday PM Worship: 7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN CHURCH

(Formerly God's Victorious Army)
Sunday 8:30am to 10:30am - Worship Service
Monday 7:00 pm - Women's Fellowship
Tuesday nights - Home cellgroup
Wednesday - 7:30pm to 9:00pm Mid Week Service
Friday 7:30pm to 9:00pm Prayer Meeting
Saturday nights - Praise and worship practice
Last Friday of the month - Overnight praying meeting

Pastor Brendon Perez - Tel# 2359246

Business

Economist: Investors expected Mubarak's ouster

CAIRO (AP)—President Hosni Mubarak's decision to transfer power to his deputy and not step down will likely fuel the fears of international investors who had sought a clear end to the more than two weeks of protests that have plunged Egypt into uncertainty.

The announcement late Thursday by the embattled Egyptian leader fell far short of the demands of protesters who had been rallying by the tens of thousands for the past 17 days in hopes of driving Mubarak and his regime from power.

The tug-of-war between the protesters and Mubarak has rattled international investors, prompting an exodus of foreign funds and raising worries that the scheduled relaunch of the country's stock market on Feb. 13, after a two-week closure, would result in a crash.

Mubarak's speech, during which he had been widely expected to step down, was sure to inject new concerns into an already jittery market.

"I believe this man is going to destroy this poor economy," said John Sfakianakis, chief economist with the Riyadh, Saudi Arabia-based Banque Saudi Fransi. "The statement he made was completely, completely, the opposite of what the international investor community was anticipating."

After tensions had eased over the past week, he said, "we're

going back to the worse case scenario where international investors are going to sell off."

The news comes at a difficult time for Egypt.

The government was already scrambling to raise cash through a second Treasury bill auction in three days. The 3.5 billion pound (\$595 million) T-bill offering was a bid to shore up investor confidence in the country after the currency dropped days earlier to its lowest level in six years and the stock market, before shutting down Jan. 28, lost almost 17 percent in two consecutive sessions.

Wael Ziada, head of Egypt research at the Cairo-based investment bank EFG-Hermes, said Mubarak's announcement triggered an "unbelievable" amount of rage in Cairo's Tahrir Square, the epicenter of the protests. Hours earlier, Ziada had predicted that the market would decline, but not crash.

"I don't see a near-term end to this," he said. "People are increasing in numbers, and they're not going to leave tonight."

Even before the military announced earlier Thursday on national television that it had stepped in to "safeguard the country" and assured protesters that Mubarak would meet their demands, there was at least a glimmer of hope Egypt would be able to overcome the economic challenges that had begun to mount since the protests began on Jan. 25.

Report: Hackers in China hit Western oil companies

BEIJING (AP)—Hackers operating from China stole sensitive information from Western oil companies, a U.S. security firm reported Thursday, adding

Nation

Ariz. governor countersues federal government

PHOENIX (AP)—Gov. Jan Brewer sued the federal government Thursday for failing to control Arizona's border with Mexico and enforce immigration laws, and for sticking the state with huge costs associated with jailing illegal immigrants who commit crimes.

The lawsuit claims the federal government has failed to protect Arizona from an “invasion” of illegal immigrants. It seeks increased reimbursements and extra safeguards, such as additional border fences.

Brewer’s court filing serves as a countersuit in the federal government’s legal challenge to Arizona’s new enforcement immigration law. The U.S. Justice Department is seeking to invalidate the law.

“Because the federal government has failed to protect the citizens of Arizona, I am left with no other choice,” Brewer said as sign-carrying protesters yelled chants at her and at other champions of the immigration law. Justice Department spokeswoman Tracy Schmaler declined to comment on the filing. But a spokesman for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which is in charge of policing the country’s borders, called Brewer’s lawsuit a meritless action and said Border Patrol staffing is higher than ever.

“Not only do actions like this ignore all of the statistical evidence, they also belittle the significant progress that our men and women in uniform have made to protect this border and the people who live alongside it,” spokesman Matthew Chandler said. “We welcome



Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer walks into the Sandra Day O’Connor Federal Courthouse Thursday, Feb. 10, 2011 in Phoenix moments after announcing plans to counter sue the federal government for failing to enforce immigration laws.

any state and local government or law enforcement agency to join with us to address the remaining challenges.”

Brewer’s lawsuit seeks a court order that would require the federal government to take extra steps to protect Arizona—such as more border fences—until the border is controlled. Brewer also asks for additional border agents and technology along the state’s border with Mexico.

The governor isn’t seeking a lump-

sum award, but rather asks for policy changes in the way the federal government reimburses states for the costs of jailing illegal immigrants who are convicted of state crimes. Such changes would give the state more reimbursement.

Arizona’s enforcement law was passed amid years of complaints that the federal government hasn’t done enough to lessen the state’s role as the nation’s busiest illegal entry point. Its

Impatient, Obama sharply questions Mubarak pledge

WASHINGTON (AP)—Bristling with impatience, President Barack Obama on Thursday openly and sharply questioned whether Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak’s pledge to shift power to his vice president is an “immediate, meaningful or sufficient” sign of reform for a country in upheaval.

Without naming Mubarak, Obama issued a written statement that criticized the leader for not offering clarity to his people or a concrete path to democracy. He called on Egyptian government leaders to do so, declaring: “They have not yet seized that opportunity.”

Obama’s comments came after Mubarak, in a televised speech, refused to step down despite intense speculation that he was on the brink of ouster. He said he was delegat-



Obama

ing powers to Vice President Omar Suleiman, yet Mubarak remained president and defiantly said he would so until a successor was elected to replace him in September. Protesters were shocked, saddened and enraged.

At the White House, Obama scrambled with his national security team over how to respond to a speech that had left many surprised and even baffled. In his statement, Obama challenged Egypt’s leaders to plainly explain what the new changes mean and how they would lead them to the freedoms or opportunities that have driven enormous crowds into the streets since late January.

“Too many Egyptians remain unconvinced that the government is serious about a genuine transition to de-

mocracy,” Obama said, “and it is the responsibility of the government to speak clearly to the Egyptian people and the world.”

Still, analysts and even U.S. officials themselves acknowledge the White House has limited power to shape what Egypt does.

Obama devoted most of statement to the familiar calls by his government for Egypt to respect the rights of its people and to immediately negotiate a path to free elections.

The fast-changing developments capped 17 days of mass anti-government protests, the strongest challenge ever to Mubarak’s nearly 30 years of authoritarian rule. The White House has warned Egypt’s leaders that they should not expect those protests to go away until they respond appropriately; at issue are deep concerns over repression, poverty and corruption.

passage ignited protests over whether the law would lead to racial profiling, and prompted lawsuits by the Justice Department, civil rights groups and other opponents seeking to have it thrown out.

The law would have required police, while enforcing other laws, to question a person’s immigration status if officers had reasonable suspicion the person was in the country illegally. That requirement was put on hold by U.S. District Judge Susan Bolton, along with a mandate that immigrants obtain or carry immigration registration papers.

The judge, however, let other parts of the law take effect, such as a provision that bans people from blocking traffic while seeking or offering day-labor services on streets.

Brewer challenged Bolton’s decision in an appeals court in San Francisco.

She argued the judge erred by accepting speculation by the federal government that the law might burden legal immigrants, and by concluding the federal government likely would prevail. Brewer’s appeal is still pending.

Arizona Attorney General Tom Horne, one of the lawyers defending the law on behalf of the state, said Arizona bears staggering costs from illegal immigration, yet the federal government maintains the state is prevented from assisting in the enforcement of federal immigration law.

Horne said Washington has failed to protect the state against an invasion by illegal immigrants.

“The word ‘invasion’ does not necessarily mean invasion of one country by another country,” Horne said. “It can mean large numbers of illegal immigrants from various countries.”

Lee, scandalized, fell in a Washington flash

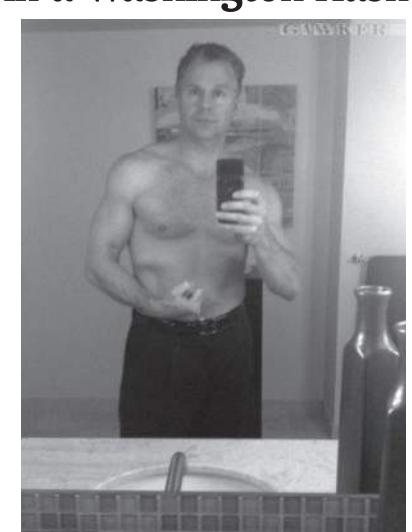
WASHINGTON (AP)—He was a rising star in Congress at lunchtime—and out of office by dinner.

Rep. Christopher Lee fell from power this week with a velocity seldom seen in the annals of Washington sex scandals, a blinking red caution sign for those who need one that the speed and reach of the Internet can crash a political career in the time it takes to push a button. The now-famous photo of a shirtless Lee, R-N.Y., moved across cyberspace at 2:33 p.m. EST Wednesday, for just about anyone who wanted to see it. Three hours later, Lee resigned.

What happened in between on Capitol Hill remains unclear. But Republicans, still scrambling for their footing less than two months after assuming control of the House, insisted that Lee, who is married and has a young son, didn’t need to be pushed.

“Congressman Lee made his own decision that he thought was in his own best interest and the interest of his family,” said House Speaker John Boehner. He refused to discuss any contact he might have had with Lee, saying only that he became aware of the issue after the photo appeared online Wednesday and then learned of Lee’s resignation after 6 p.m. “I think he made the right decision for himself and for his family.”

Boehner’s 5-week-old Republican majority, of course, benefited from Lee’s exit and the distraction that largely departed with him. Roll Call, a Capitol Hill newspaper, re-



This undated photo provided by Gawker shows Rep. Chris Lee, R-N.Y., posing shirtless in front of a mirror.

ported last summer that the Ohio Republican had warned Lee and other newer members of Congress to knock off their unseemly partying with female lobbyists.

Lee, 46, was moving quickly up the House Republican ranks after winning the seat in 2008 despite a Democratic wave nationwide. A successful businessman, just last month he won a coveted seat on the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee after only one term in office. Lee’s net worth is estimated between \$8.5 million and \$30.7 million and ranks 19th among House members, according to a tally of 2009 House financial disclosure reports by the Center for Responsive Politics.

ACROSS THE NATION

Natural gas explosion in Pa. kills 5 people

ALLENTOWN, Pa. (AP)—A thunderous gas explosion devastated a rowhouse neighborhood, killing five people, and suspicion fell on an 83-year-old cast-iron gas main. The fiery blast was the latest natural-gas disaster to raise questions about the safety of the nation’s aging, 2.5-million-mile network of gas and liquid pipelines. The explosion, which flattened a pair of rowhouses and set fire to a block of homes late Wednes-

day night, occurred in an area where the underground gas main lacked shut-off valves. It took utility workers five hours of toil in the freezing cold to punch through ice, asphalt and concrete and seal the 12-inch main with foam, finally cutting off the flow of gas that fed the raging flames.

‘Granddad Bandit’ bank robber pleads guilty in Va.

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)—The graying, balding man dubbed the “Granddad

Bandit” pleaded guilty in federal court Thursday to robbing two Virginia banks and acknowledged two dozen other heists from New York to Texas. Michael Francis Mara, 53, quietly answered “Yes, ma’am” or “No ma’am” but made no statement during a plea hearing before U.S. Magistrate Judge Hannah Lauck in Richmond. Mara will not be charged in the other robberies. Authorities say Mara took more than \$83,000 in the heists, starting in Richmond in 2008 and ending with a

North Carolina holdup the day before his Aug. 11 arrest. He was captured after a six-hour standoff with police at his Baton Rouge, La., home.

Test gets almost 1 in 5 syphilis cases wrong

ATLANTA (AP)—Hundreds of people may have been told they tested positive for syphilis when they didn’t actually have the disease, health officials say. A study of five U.S. labs shows about 18 percent of the positive

results from a test method used since the 1980s were actually negative, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Thursday. Experts previously thought the statistic was much lower—under 7 percent. The CDC recommends additional testing when this particular test gives a positive result. But even if most doctors retest, the new research suggests that some people have unnecessarily worried they were infected with an infamous sexually transmitted disease.

World

Egypt protesters furious at Mubarak's speech

CAIRO (AP)—The mood in Tahrir Square was exultant. Finally, the protesters thought, their moment in history had come: President Hosni Mubarak was about to quit. Then euphoria turned to fury.

As Mubarak began speaking on television Thursday night, his voice reverberating over audio speakers and mobile telephone radios, the words the huge crowd expected did not come.

Unease turned to head-shaking disbelief and murmurs of disgust. Then anger surged, and tears of frustration fell.

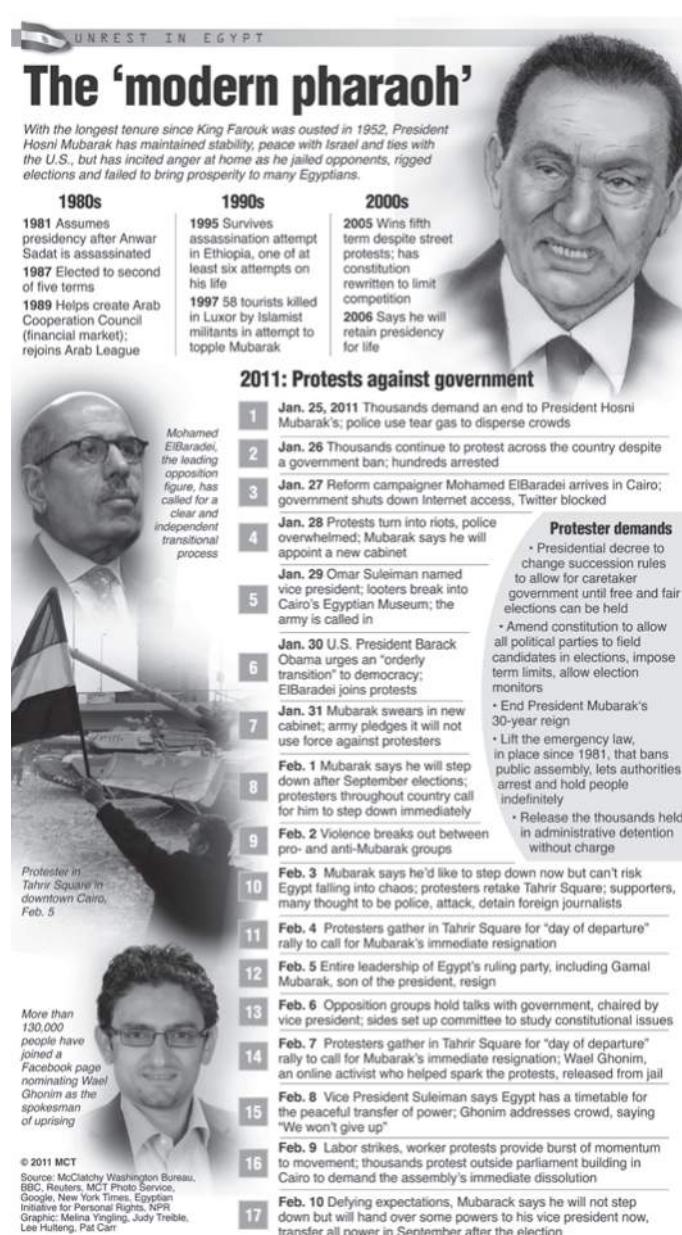
Mubarak was not stepping down.

Even before he finished speaking, people were booing and chanting "Get out!" and "We're not happy!" while waving their shoes in the air, the soles facing toward a large open-air screen that showed the president speaking from notes behind a podium.

Gesturing with shoes is a grave insult in the Arab world. But it was the crowd that felt insulted, cheated, their expectations shattered after a day of conflicting reports about what would come next in the Egyptian crisis.

One of the rumors, fed partly by a military statement that protesters' demands would be met, was that Mubarak would resign. Instead, he handed his powers to his vice president and promised reforms, including repeal of the hated emergency laws.

He said he was "adamant to



continue to shoulder my responsibility to protect the constitution and safeguard the interests of the people" and vowed that he would remain in the country.

The many Egyptians who

oppose him, however, believe no genuine reform is possible as long as Mubarak stays in office. They said they would stage bigger protests, and some even called for the mili-

main them to make them appear more pathetic. Several families have been reunited with their abducted offspring since Beijing-based social researcher Yu Jianrong launched a campaign last month urging people to post photos of such children on microblogs—web-sites similar to Twitter.

Rights group says China activist beaten over video

BEIJING (AP)—A Chinese activist lawyer and his wife have been beaten by police and state security officials for making a secret video that shows their life under strict house arrest, a rights group said Friday. China Human Rights Defenders said a reliable source told it that Chen Guangcheng and his wife, Yuan Weijing, have been blocked from going to a hospital after Tuesday's beating, which was described as "not light" but not life-threatening. Chinese officials could not be reached for comment, and the group's claims could not be independently verified.

WORLD BRIEFS

Gunmen kill 8 in violent north Mexico border city

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico (AP)—Gunmen barged into a bar in the battered border city of Ciudad Juarez and opened fire late Thursday, killing seven women and one man, authorities said. Three other people were wounded at the "Las Torres" bar and were in critical condition, said Arturo Sandoval, spokesman for Chihuahua state prosecutors. Sandoval said investigators were still trying to determine who was behind the attack.

US man ordered held 14 more days in Pakistan

LAHORE, Pakistan (AP)—A Pakistani judge on Friday ordered that an American, detained in the shooting deaths of two Pakistanis, remain in custody for 14 more days and also told the government it must clarify whether the man has diplomatic immunity as Washington claims. The ongoing detention of the man, identified by Pakistanis as Raymond Allen Davis, is seriously straining the relationship between the U.S. and Pakistan,

China online photos aim at rescue of abducted kids

SHANGHAI (AP)—An online campaign to gather photos of Chinese kids begging on the streets is helping reunite families riven by kidnappings, and putting pressure on authorities to do more to prevent gangs from kidnapping and exploiting the children. Many of the children seen begging in Chinese cities, often in the arms of women who may not be their mothers, are snatched from their real families by kidnappers and then sold into virtual slavery, forced to beg by gangs that sometimes

tary to oust him.

"The speech is provocative," said Muhammed Abdul Rahman, a lawyer. "This is going to bring people together more, and people will come out in greater numbers."

Hazim Khalifa, a chemist, said: "He's tried to divide people before. Now the people understand him and they've learned his ways."

Hisham Bastawisi, a reformist judge, said Mubarak "lives in a coma" and that "the armed forces must interfere and oust him before it is too late."

Tears welled up in the eyes of people who just half an hour earlier had been waving flags in elation and chant-

ing "We're almost there!" as hundreds of thousands crammed into the square to await Mubarak's speech.

In addition to the long sit-in at Cairo's central square, new demonstrations and strikes have erupted across the country as more and more Egyptians call for change.

In the weeks of protest, the square has evolved into a multifaceted tent city complete with makeshift clinics, food stalls and numerous displays and dioramas celebrating the achievements of activists and the perfidy of the government.

Almost immediately after the president's speech, many in the crowd began slowly fil-

ing out in sullen anger, while others marched to the offices of the state television station, which has broadcast pro-government messages.

A massive demonstration had been planned for Friday, but earlier protesters had assumed it would be a victory celebration after the expected resignation of the president.

Khaled Abdel Hamid, a protest organizer, said protesters planned to escalate their actions and march on the nearby Ministry of Information and state television headquarters Friday.

"This is a poor speech from a poor leader," he said. "If he is stubborn, we are stubborn. We are ready to die here."

Minister: Israel must move ahead toward peace

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak said Thursday the country must move forward with the Mideast peace process and try to promote stability with all its neighbors despite the turbulence in the region.

The Israeli minister spoke to reporters briefly after meeting with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. The meeting took place as Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was announcing that he would remain president but was handing his powers to Vice President Omar Suleiman.

"We have to continue the whole time to look for ways to move forward in this new reality because the alternatives are more complicated, more complex and more dangerous from any other option," Barak said in Hebrew. "We have to continue to move towards trying to find arrangements with all our neighbors."

Barak said he would not respond to what is happening in Egypt, explaining that "it's up to the Egyptian people to find a way and to do it according with their own constitution, norms and practices."

But Israel is deeply worried about the prospect that Mubarak

could be forced to step down by the unprecedented street protests in Egypt and that a less friendly government will emerge.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has warned that any new government must maintain their 1979 peace deal—Israel's first with an Arab nation. And Israel's President Shimon Peres delivered an impassioned defense of Mubarak on Saturday, crediting him with preserving three decades of peace between the two nations and warning that his ouster and replacement by the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt's best organized opposition movement, won't bring peace.

Barak said that the recent events in Egypt and elsewhere make a lot of Israelis "feel weak-kneed."

"Israel is strong, although we do have to follow things very carefully and make sure that Israel remains strong and to upgrade our security situation," he said. "That said, the reality will not change for the better if we will sink into inaction. We have to move forward all the time with the peace process. We have to diminish tensions."

Barak said he and Ban dis-

cussed prospects by the Quartet of Mideast peacemakers—the U.N., the U.S. the European Union and Russia—and the international community to move forward on the stalled Mideast peace process and recent developments in Egypt and North Africa.

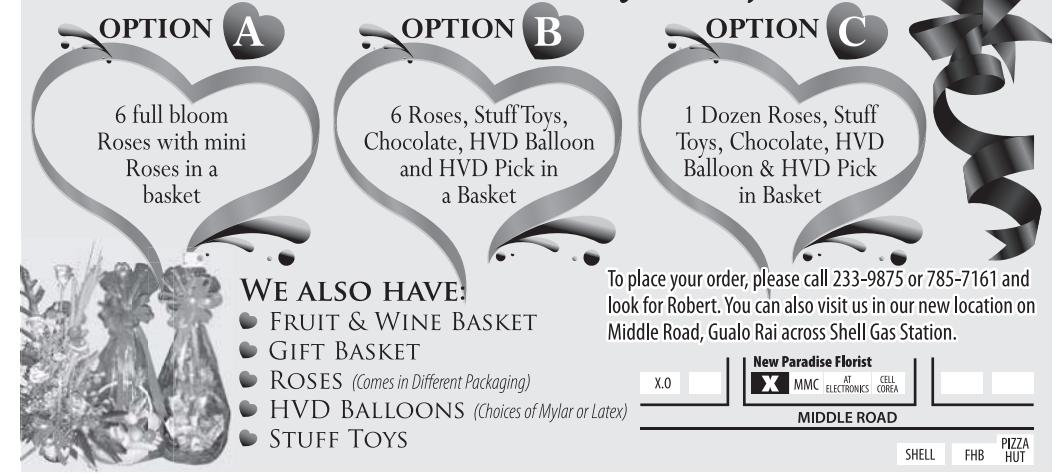
The Quartet met last Saturday in Munich and expressed regret at Israel's decision to end a 10-month moratorium on construction in Jewish settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem which led to the collapse of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks just weeks after they had restarted in September. The U.S., U.N. and EU and others have called for urgent progress on efforts to press Israel and the Palestinians to resume talks. Barak said Israel recently approved a set of confidence-building measures and is ready to open immediate discussions with the Palestinians on how to establish security arrangements with the future Palestinian state. Ultimately, he said, both sides have to deal with the core outstanding issues face-to-face "in order to have a breakthrough or to find what could be done if a full agreement cannot be achieved."

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PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, February 12, 2011

Consulate to bring ePassport technology to Tinian

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Philippine Consulate General office on Saipan will soon be conducting mobile consular services for Filipino on Tinian.

Consul General Medardo Macaraig, Violaflor Enerlan-Ancheta, and Antonio David will comprise the consular team on Feb. 19 to 20, from 9am to

4pm, at the Timian Dynasty Hotel & Casino.

According to Macaraig, this will be the first mobile services using ePassport technology.

"In the past, Filipinos from Tinian and Rota have to travel to Saipan to apply for ePassports as personal appearance is necessary to obtain their photographs, fingerprints and signatures. The desktop computer that was used for ePassport applicants could be used

in Saipan only," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Macaraig said that with the new mobile ePassport system, they are able to use a laptop "which can be brought to places outside of Saipan."

"Filipinos on Tinian will now have an easier time to obtain an ePassport as this technology will be utilized during the Feb. 19 to 20 mobile consular services," said Macaraig, adding that tests on the ePass-

port equipment have been successful on Saipan.

The consul general said that passport requirements remain the same, except for the photograph, which is no longer required.

Requirements for passport application and other consular documents may be found on the website www.philippines-saipan.org.

To facilitate the process and allow the Consulate to serve more Filipinos, Macaraig urged pass-

port applicants to download the application form from the Consulate website and send the accomplished form by fax to 234-1849, email to saiapanpcg@pticom.com, or mail to P.O. Box 500731 Saipan, MP 96950 CNMI.

Macaraig added that they will also offer mobile consular services for Filipinos on Rota very soon.

For information, call 234-1848, fax 234-1850 or email saiapanpcg@pticom.com.

Aquino: Be part of peace deals thru Facebook, Twitter

By NORMAN BORDADORA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—President Benigno Aquino III is eyeing peace agreements with the communist rebels and Muslim separatists with the help of the social networking sites Facebook and Twitter.

In a speech during the symbolic candle-lighting rites for peace at the Quezon Memorial Circle on Tuesday night, Mr. Aquino said the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process would update the public on the peace negotiations with both groups through its Facebook and Twitter accounts.

President Aquino asked the public to buy into the peace advocacy by sending their views and suggestions on how a meaningful peace with the insurgents can be attained, again through the social networking sites.

"Every Filipino is affected by the peace talks. And ever since, I already asked that everyone should participate; be part of the solution instead of adding to the problem," President Aquino said during the Light of Peace candle-lighting rites.

"Some may be asking, 'How can I be part of the solution?' In my belief, it's rather simple. Be informed, be vigilant and participate in issues concerning peace," President Aquino said.

OWWA, POEA call for noms of OFW sector reps

The process has begun for the screening and selection of OFW Sector representatives to the board of trustees of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration and the governing board of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, pursuant to Section 32 of RA 9042 (Migrant Workers Act of 1995), as amended by RA 10022, and its Implementing Rules. The nomination process is now in full swing and both the OWWA and POEA are ready to accept nominations from qualified organizations. (PR)

Saipan beauticians obtain training in Thailand

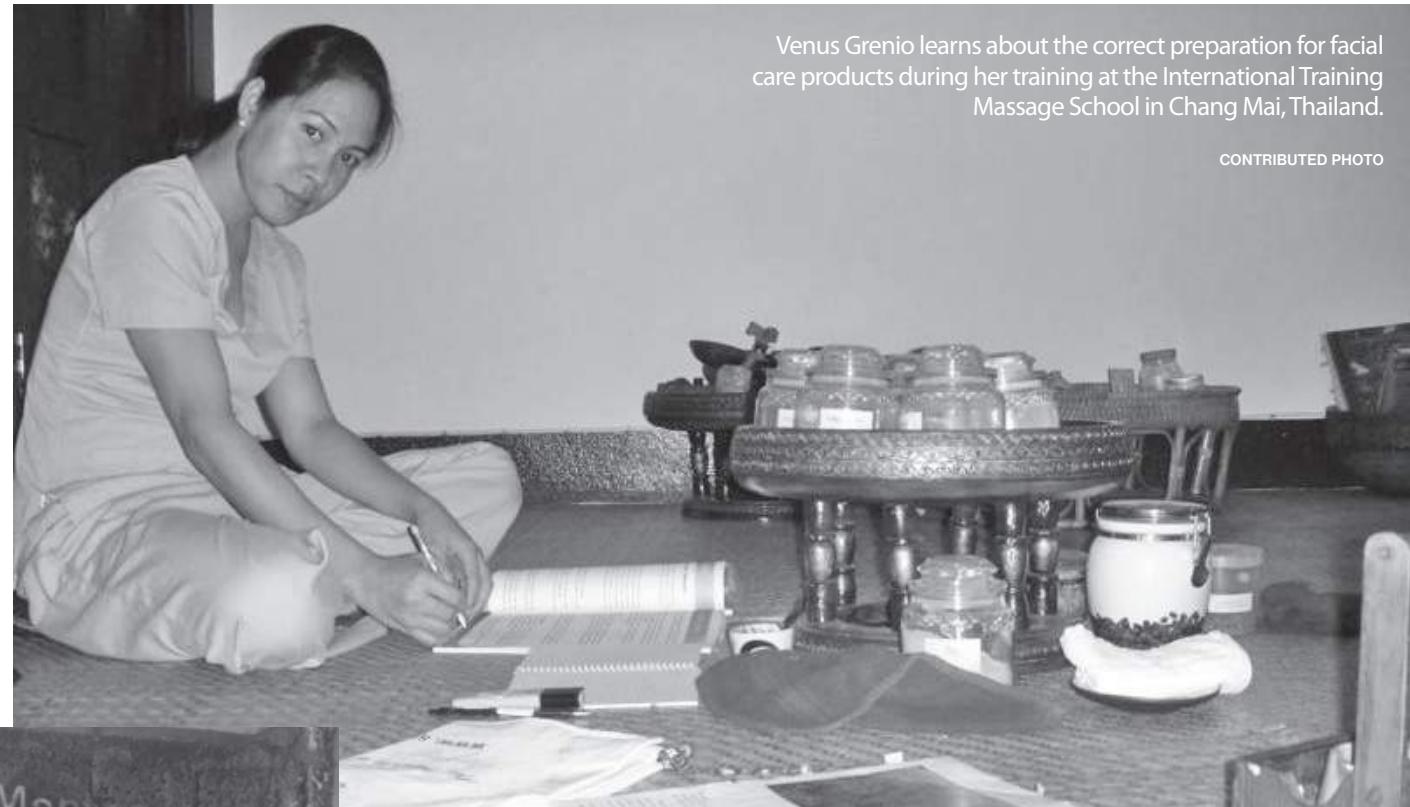
By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Two all-around beauticians on Saipan recently obtained professional development training at a renowned school in Thailand.

Serenity Salon and Spa's Michelle Caleon and Venus Grenio took up Spa Mantra courses at the International Training Massage School in Chang Mai, Thailand on Jan. 8 to 18.

Founded in 1992 by Thai traditional medicine professional Chongkol Setthakorn, ITM is a leading training institution that uses the universal VAK—visual, auditory, and kinesthetic methods of teaching.

ITM is accredited by the Thailand Ministry of Education, approved by the Ministry of



Venus Grenio learns about the correct preparation for facial care products during her training at the International Training Massage School in Chang Mai, Thailand.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Public Health, as well as recognized and approved internationally by professional colleges and associations and has been a choice of many luxury five-star hotels and resorts to train their staff in the healing art of ancient Thai massage.

According to Caleon and Grenio, it was their first time to go to Thailand to receive professional training subsidized by Serenity Salon and Spa.

"The objective was to improve our skills and learn new techniques that we could use for our loyal customers here at Serenity Salon and Spa," Caleon told *Saipan Tribune*.

After arriving in Bangkok, Grenio said they had to wait for a few hours before they boarded the local flight to Chang Mai.

"Our Thailand trip was really an adventure. We had to arrange for a flight to Chang Mai, we had to look for our school. But it was a lot of fun," said Grenio who has been with Serenity Salon and Spa for four years.

According to Grenio, she was prepared for her Thailand trip as she packed with her not just toiletries and first aid medicines but also food—cup noodles and cookies—good for her entire stay, which proved to be very handy.

"I do eat Thai food here on Saipan but when we got there, everything they eat is so spicy," she recounted.

Even the local McDonald's only offer spicy burgers, added Caleon.

The two beauticians both took up the Facial and Body Treatment course. In addition, Caleon also learned the Hot Stone Healing Massage, while Grenio focused on eyelash extensions and threading.

Caleon said she and Grenio joined over 20 students from different countries who were in Chang Mai to improve their skills.

Caleon, who has been with Serenity Salon and Spa for six months, said the training taught

her a lot, from massage techniques to facial care product preparation.

"For example, I learned how to avoid facial massage techniques that cause wrinkles. Through the Hot Stone Healing Massage, I learned how the special volcano rocks can absorb stress to relax one's muscles," she narrated.

For their final exam and assessment, Caleon said they had to mix their own facial skin care product that their Thai teacher used on them as well as perform hands-on facial and massage demonstrations to ensure that proper techniques were learned.

After the training, Caleon and Grenio said they were able to tour Bangkok for a day and had authentic Thai experiences like riding the three-wheel *tuktuk* and spending time at a temple and the Maesa Elephant Camp.

"We're really thankful for our Thailand experience and we look forward to applying what we learned here at Serenity," said the two.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Michelle Caleon receives her certificate from her instructor after completing her course at the International Trainng Massage School in Chang Mai, Thailand last month.

Philippines poised for sustained 7-pct. growth



PLANE MISHAP

A Filipino boy walks beside the wreckage of a burnt Cessna plane at the Lingayen airport in Pangasinan province, northern Philippines on Tuesday, Feb. 8, 2011. Two students of a flying school suffered slight injuries after the Cessna plane they were flying figured in an accident and burst into flames.

By RIZA T. OLCHONDRA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

The Philippines is poised to grow 7 percent or better in the next six to 10 years—the same feat that India and Vietnam had accomplished in the last decade, according to economist Bernardo M. Villegas, who co-founded the University of Asia and the Pacific (formerly known as the Center for Research and Communication).

He said the Philippines could even sustain an average gross domestic product growth of 7-9 percent in the next six years, given significant improvements in governance and infrastructure as well as strong remittance inflows.

In a briefing, Villegas said that such high level of sustained growth was crucial in curbing the poverty level for the next 10 years to 15 percent from the current 30 percent of the population.

He said inflation could be in the 4-5 percent range. "I would

say 4.3 percent. This is nothing to worry about," Villegas said, adding that he expected interest rates to remain low.

This means investors with good projects will have no problem getting financing.

Villegas said agribusiness and water infrastructure projects would be crucial moving forward as demand for high-value crops was expected to surge in increasingly affluent markets like China.

Another good sign for the Philippines was that there existed a lot of room for investments here, he added.

Villegas said the savings rate was at an all-time high of 30 percent of GDP while the investment rate was only 17 percent, leaving room for big-ticket projects in the high-growth sectors to be funded by local money.

An investment-led growth was getting strong support from the foreign investment community, Villegas said, citing the Joint Foreign Chambers'

roadmap dubbed "Arangkada Philippines."

The roadmap describes how a 7- to 9-percent growth in GDP can be achieved in the next five to six years through investments in seven key industries.

These are agribusiness, business process outsourcing, creative industries, infrastructure, manufacturing and logistics, mining and tourism, medical travel and retirement.

What was encouraging was that these were the same "sunrise industries" in which the local taipans and conglomerates were investing heavily, Villegas said.

He said the likes of San Miguel Corp., the SM group, the Metro Pacific group, the Ayala's, First Philippine Holdings and the Phinma group, among others, were leading the way to an investment-led recovery.

However, foreign investments must complement local investments if the Philippines was to sustain its target growth rates, Villegas pointed out.

BIR chief: General probed for tax evasion, wife may follow

By TETCH TORRES
INQUIRER.NET, RADYO INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—The Bureau of Internal Revenue said Friday that it was considering filing a tax evasion case against the wife of a former Armed Forces of the Philippines general for her purchase of properties in the US.

During a Senate hearing last Monday, Senator Jose "Jinggo" Estrada presented pictures of two houses in the US allegedly owned by Erlinda Yambao-Ligot, wife of retired Lieutenant General Jacinto Ligot.

One of the houses was at 7102 Stanton Avenue, Buena Park, California which was bought in cash worth \$183,868 in 2002.

The second property is at 1240 South Cabernet Circle

in Anaheim, California, which was worth \$504,000 when allegedly bought by Ligot's wife on Dec. 23, 2003.

"If it the properties are under the name of the wife, then the case will be directed at her because she managed to buy properties without reporting any income," BIR Commissioner Kim Jacinto-Henares said over Radyo Inquirer's "Tapatan" with Jay Sonza and Den Macaranas.

"Tax evasion is personal to the person," she added.

Henares reiterated that they were closely monitoring the Senate and Congressional inquiries regarding the military fund. "By monitoring the hearing, we can determine the direction of our investigation," Henares said but confirmed that they were already investigating Ligot.

"Actually we are looking into him," Henares said but refused to give further details, adding "we cannot broadcast what we have been doing."

Ligot served as military comptroller when the late Angelo Reyes was chief of staff.

Quiet investigation

The BIR has started a quiet investigation of the personalities that have been tagged in the ongoing congressional investigation into military corruption.

Henares said the agency has been keeping tabs on the congressional inquiries into the alleged misuse of public funds involving former and incumbent officials.

"The BIR is an avid and interested reader and viewer of all

investigations," Henares told a news briefing.

"Every time there is this type of controversy, the BIR is close on the heels of it. So without anyone coercing us or making advocacy of it, the BIR is ready to investigate," she said.

Henares said the investigations being conducted separately by the Senate and the House of Representatives had provided the agency with "hints" about tax cheats.

She said the BIR has requested for copies of the transcript of the proceedings and affidavits of the whistle-blowers which it could use in pursuing tax evasion cases against erring public officials.

"We work based on documents. The testimonies are not enough. We have to look for

Trillanes sees Arroyo's role in alleged AFP corruption

By MAILA AGER
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—Senator Antonio Trillanes IV on Thursday indicated that the ongoing Senate investigation into alleged corruption in the military may reach up to the administration of former President and now Pampanga Representative Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Masyado ho kasing malaki 'yong perang involved that sa ganong level, sa Malacañang lang nagre-release ng ganong level (the amounts involved were so huge that in that level, it's only in Malacañang that such huge amounts could have been ordered released)," Trillanes told reporters at the regular Senate forum.

He pointed out that if former military comptroller Carlos Garcia, who has been accused of illegally amassing P303 million, got this much, then Trillanes said: "Definitely those higher than him got more. Yung mga ganung amounts, only Malacañang releases those amounts (Such amounts are only released through Malacañang)."

But Trillanes maintained that the late former defense secretary and Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes was one of the "principals" of Garcia.

"I was being dared by the late General, well I did. I mentioned that he was one of the principals behind Gen. Garcia and Gen. (Jacinto) Ligot. Dahil kahit sabihin ni General Reyes

sa akin na hindi sya kumukuhha dun sa mga transactions ni Gen. Garcia pero he admitted na dumadaan sa kanya e as the Secretary of National Defense, he was in a position to stop that di ba?" he said.

"Then I told him: Well if you won't spill the beans, you will have to fall with these powerful people," the senator said.

Trillanes said that Reyes, through his emissaries, had admitted during the Senate hearings that there were transactions coming from the higher ups that went through him but he did not get anything from it.

While Reyes might not have anything to do with the alleged illegal transactions of Garcia, he was not yet off the hook as

he had been directly accused by Rabusa of receiving at least P50 million "send-off" money when he retired as Chief of Staff in 2001, said the senator.

And while he said Reyes was one of Garcia's "principals," Trillanes clarified that he was not the person fronting for Garcia.

"No. He was not the same person," he said, "But the point here is that as Secretary of National Defense, if he knew that there were transactions passing through him that is illegal or questionable, at the very least, he should have questioned or stopped those transactions from pushing through."

Asked to identify that person, Trillanes said, "I won't go there yet."

ported as income.
"All kinds of income, whether legal or illegal, are (taxable). But of course, that's a very idealistic way of saying it," she said, smiling.

It would not be for the BIR to determine if the source of the taxpayer's income was legal or not, she explained.

"The only time we ask questions is when you report an income and you took an expense. Because if you have an illegal source, you can't have any expense. We will definitely come back at you," she said.

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17 Filipinos among crew of tanker seized by pirates

By JERRY E. ESPLANADA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Seventeen Filipino seamen and eight other foreign crew members of the oil tanker MV Irene SL are being held captive by Somali pirates who seized the Greek-flagged vessel on Wednesday in the north Arabian Sea, the European Union Naval Force reported on its website.

The latest ship hijacking, which was reported by EU-NAVFOR's task force Somalia, brought to 138 the number of Filipino sailors being held by pirates in the east African nation.

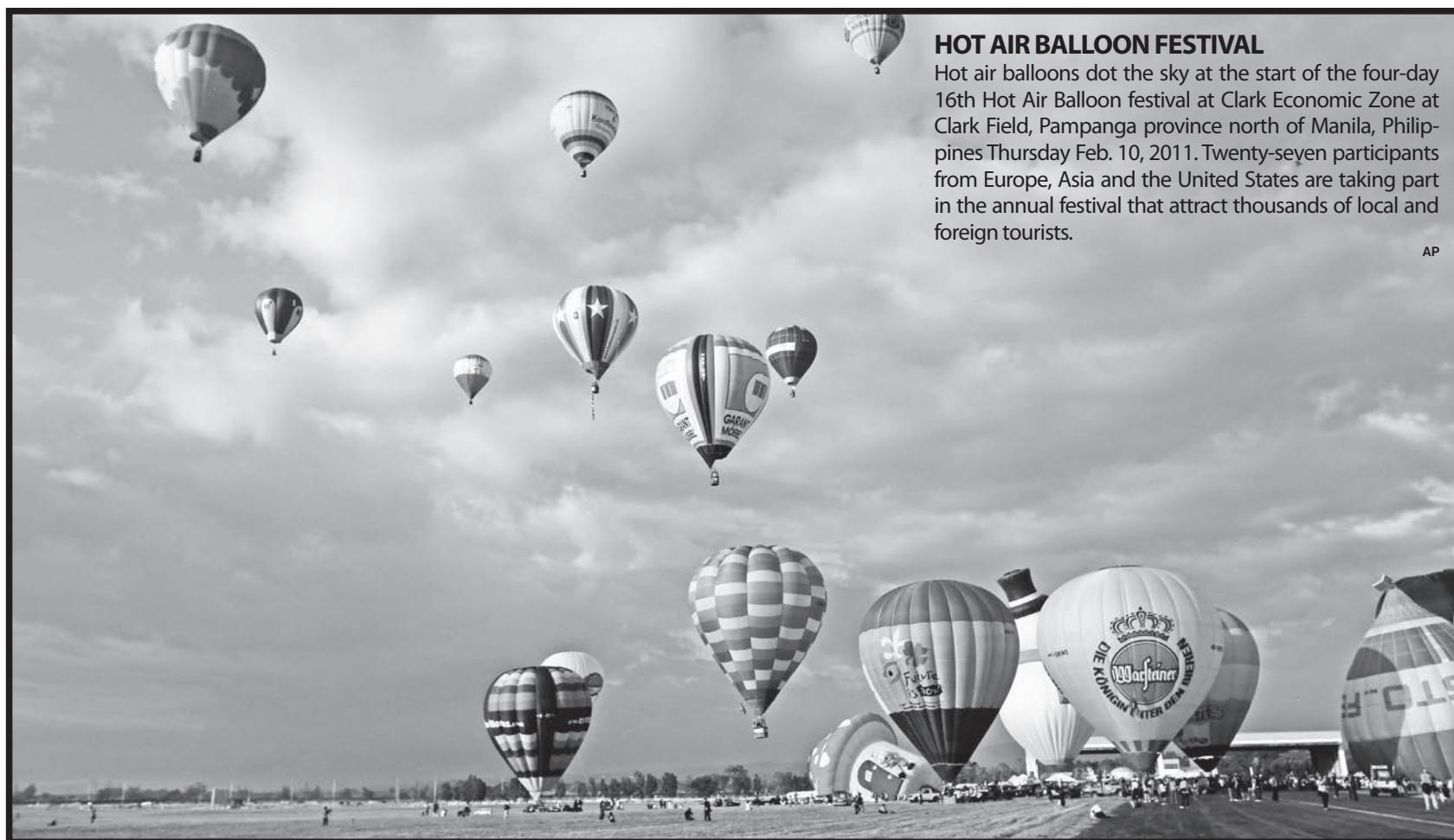
The EU-NAVFOR report said that the 319,247-ton ship was about 350 nautical miles southeast of Muscat when it was attacked by the pirates.

The Department of Foreign Affairs has yet to confirm the EU-NAVFOR report.

The vessel, which was on its way to the Suez Canal, has a crew of 25.

Aside from 17 Filipinos, the tanker has seven Greek crew members and one Georgian.

EU-NAVFOR said there was no "communication with the vessel and no information regarding the condition of the crew," but it was continuing to monitor the situation.



HOT AIR BALLOON FESTIVAL

Hot air balloons dot the sky at the start of the four-day 16th Hot Air Balloon festival at Clark Economic Zone at Clark Field, Pampanga province north of Manila, Philippines Thursday Feb. 10, 2011. Twenty-seven participants from Europe, Asia and the United States are taking part in the annual festival that attract thousands of local and foreign tourists.

AP

'Taiwanese deportations in national interest'

MANILA, Philippines (AFP)—The Philippines said Thursday it deported 14 alleged Taiwanese criminals to China to protect its national interests.

Presidential spokesman Edwin Lacierda also rejected a demand by Taiwan's representative to Manila for the government to apologize, insisting that authorities acted based on evidence gathered against the group.

"It is based on our national interest to do so," Lacierda told reporters when asked why the 14 were sent to China instead of Taiwan.

"These Taiwanese nationals are part of an international crime ring so on that basis and based on the evidence that was presented...we did what was proper to do so."

"The evidence is in China, the crime was committed in China, so it was in our best national interest to deport them to China."

Taiwan has expressed fury over last week's deportation of the 14 to the mainland, saying they should have been sent back to face justice on the self-ruled island.

China and Taiwan have been ruled separately since the end of a civil war in 1949.

Taiwan's top official in Manila,

Sanctuary hatches 24th PH eagle bred in captivity

By JOSELLE BADILLA
INQUIRER MINDANAO

DAVAO CITY, Philippines—Eagle conservationists here have successfully hatched what they claim is the 24th Philippine Eagle (*Pithecopaga jefferyi*) bred in captivity.

The still unnamed eaglet, which weighed 116.5 grams, broke out of its shell after 57 days of incubation at the Philippine Eagle Foundation Center in Malagos here around 2:45 p.m. Wednesday.

The egg was produced by the natural pairing of Jag and Ka Brianne. It was the 10th offspring of the pair.

OFW group let down by Aquino govt action in spat with Taiwan

MANILA, Philippines—A migrant rights group denounced on Thursday what it described as the government's "lack of political savvy and indiscretion" in its handling of the diplomatic spat with Taiwan over the deportation of 14 Taiwanese to the mainland.

Migrante International expressed worry over the backlash the controversy might cause on 80,000 overseas Filipino workers living on the self-governed island.

"We advise our officials to please always, always think first of how their

Donald Lee, on Wednesday accused the Philippine government of bowing to pressure from China, while labeling the deportations "inhumane."

In response to the deportations, the Taiwanese government this week toughened screening procedures for Filipinos wanting to work on the island and warned they may even be banned.

President Benigno Aquino said Thursday he may send an envoy to Taiwan to explain his government's actions.

moves will affect Filipino nationals. Our OFWs are the ones who are bearing the brunt of their blunders and foul-ups," the group's chair, Garry Martinez, said in a statement.

Taiwan earlier expressed displeasure with Philippine authorities over the deportation of 14 Taiwanese nationals to mainland China, despite protests from Taipei which said that they should be sent back to Taiwan instead.

The Taiwanese government, through its de facto ambassador to Manila, Donald C. T. Lee, earlier lodged

Meanwhile, Taipei reiterated a call for China to hand the 14 over.

"We urge the mainland side to return the persons to Taiwan soon to stand trial to enhance positive interactions between the two sides," said the Mainland Affairs Council, Taiwan's top China policy-making body.

The council promised that the suspects would be "severely punished."

The Philippine lawyer for the 14 Taiwanese, Maria Asuncion Cabrera, on

a protest and sought an apology from the government over the slight, saying it viewed the Philippines' actions as an intervention on Taiwan Strait affairs.

Martinez said OFWs in Taiwan had already conveyed their fear of a backlash "especially since the incident is presently a hot topic in local television talk shows."

"They are concerned because they say that there are insinuations from the Taiwanese public calling on their government stop the deployment of Filipinos," said Martinez.

"We are also very much concerned of the possible negative effects of this faux pas on our OFWs who are already there. The Aquino government should immediately do damage control," he said.

Thursday insisted the government had broken international law by sending them to China.

"They were unlawfully and arbitrarily arrested and denied due process," Cabrera told AFP.

"We presented their original passports which showed their point of origin was Taipei, and under the principle of nationality in international law, they should have been sent back to Taiwan."

Philippines, rebels extend peace monitors' stint

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—The Philippine government and the country's biggest Muslim rebel group agreed Thursday to extend the stint of international peace monitors helping to preserve a ceasefire in the southern Philippines.

Negotiators from the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front announced the decision after a two-day meeting in Malaysia that marked the resumption of formal peace talks for the first time since President Benigno Aquino III took office in June.

The peace process seeks to end a decades-long armed struggle by the 11,000-strong rebel front for Muslim self-rule in the southern Philippines, the homeland of minority Muslims in this predominantly Roman Catholic country.

Both sides said in a statement that the mandate of a Malaysian-led International Monitoring Team in the south would be extended by a year. The team's current mandate ends Feb. 14.

The team comprises about 40 members from Malaysia, Brunei and Libya who handle security issues involving a current cease-fire, while two Japanese representatives monitor socio-economic developments.

The two sides also agreed to continue arrangements for joint efforts to interdict criminal groups, particularly kidnap gangs whose members include rogue Moro rebels. That agreement has been credited with winning the release of kidnap victims in the past, including Irish missionary priest Rev. Michael Sennott in 2009.

The negotiators said they hope to hold their next talks March 29.



Chick no. 24 rests between feedings at the Philippine Eagle Center in Davao City. Under the care of the Philippine Eagle Foundation, the chick may contribute to increasing its kind in the wild when it gets released to its natural habitat before it turns two.

INQUIRER.NET

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Jessica Soho: News programs can win over variety shows

By INQUIRER
ENTERTAINMENT STAFF
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Says Jessica Soho, GMA 7 VP for News Programs, about the need for an all-news channel: "There's a clamor for it."

Starting this month, Q Channel 11, which started as a women/lifestyle channel, becomes GMA News TV. The new programs will be presented tomorrow night at the A. Venue in Makati City.

Soho points out, "It has been proven that Filipinos like to watch news programs and news events... [and that] if you have a good news program or a really important news event, it can compete with entertainment programs."

On the new channel, Soho will host two shows. Joining her in the front line are Mel Tiangco, Mike Enriquez, Arnold Clavio, Vicky Morales and Howie Severino. Also part of the team are Winnie Monsod and Philippine Center for Inves-

Kapuso head denies trying to 'pirate' Willie

By MARINEL R. CRUZ
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

"What Willie said made it sound like GMA 7 was trying to 'pirate' him," said GMA 7 president and CEO Felipe Gozon, reacting to Willie Revillame's recent statement that the network offered him a show while he was on indefinite leave from ABS-CBN.

"That is not accurate," Gozon told Inquirer Entertainment on Thursday. "It goes against [company] policy."

During his 50th birthday celebration last week, Revillame said Gozon had offered him a game show that would air on prime time. Willie's words: "Mr. Gozon told me not to worry because, he said, 'You're talking to the man.'"

In a statement sent to Inquirer, Gozon recounted that lawyer Boy Reyno, a "common friend" and now one of Revillame's business partners in TV5, requested a meeting to discuss "the possibility of Revillame transferring to GMA 7." This was before Revillame signed the coproduction deal with TV5 last year for "Willing Willie."

Gozon added that the subject "was brought up by them." He continued: "We didn't categorically say yes or no, as there were many complicating factors, primarily the legal problem with ABS-CBN that [Revillame] was surely going to have—not to mention the commercial considerations."

Advice to Willie

The Kapuso network head also

tigative Journalism executive director Malou Mangahas.

Question: How do you balance hard news with so-called light fare or entertainment news?

Jessica Soho: The news dictate the day's agenda. There are days when obvious kung ano 'yung top stories. There are days na... maraming hard news stories. Pero meron din kamming features na nakabangko... Every day is different. So 'yung light fare, if this is referring to features, walang formula. May mga araw na maraming nang-yayari at... 'yung features—those are the first to go.

Q: How do you make sure crime reports are not sensational?

JS: We have a lot of safeguards. For the most part, maybe 80 percent of the time, [what are] branded as crime stories, usually by critics, are public safety stories.

In the segment called "Alerto," many of the things we air—accidents, a bus that fell

off a ravine, sometimes a kidnap incident... are really public safety stories.

Q: How is your news coverage affected by the entry of a third player in the TV industry?

JS: I will acknowledge that it has become more competitive for us, but competition is good because it makes us work harder, especially in protecting our gains and keeping our edge.

Q: Competition posed by an entertainment show ("Willing Willie" on TV5) has changed the landscape of early evening news programs. How are you responding to this?

JS: Competition does not define us. Napakita na namin that we stood our ground against the competing newscast and a competing variety show, 'yung third player. I'm happy to report that "24 Oras" still has the most eyeballs in its time slot.

Q: How do you harness new media like Twitter and Facebook in news gathering?

JS: We use a lot of story ideas that are tweeted or sent to us through text messages by our



Jessica Soho, GMA 7 VP for News Programs.

viewers, or from Facebook.

Q: Maria Ressa, formerly of ABS-CBN, warned about a "race to the bottom" as far as news programs are concerned. Can you (Jessica) comment on this?

JS: I don't exactly know what she meant by that but I certainly hope it was not meant to undermine our efforts to encourage more Filipinos to watch the news. The news is important

because information is empowering. I refuse to believe that television will remain a purely entertainment medium. Sure, we have a long way to go and I have a healthy respect for criticisms about our form and content but we have made a lot of headway through the years.

Dati, when I used to cover foreign news events, nakakahiyang tumabi sa mga malalaking international networks. Pero ngayon, we can stand tall and proud alongside them because whatever they are capable of doing, kaya na rin namin. Name any big international news event and chances are, na-cover namin, including Afghanistan, Iraq, the election and inauguration of (US President) Obama, even the earthquake in Haiti.

We have also made a lot of technological leaps. I want us, in TV news, to continually push for the news agenda. I believe it should always be a race to the top and never to the bottom.

Q: Is the Philippines following the US trend of creating celebrities out of news anchors, because it probably also helps in marketing and promotions? Is this a sound

strategy? Time was when news anchors were required to be as neutral as possible.

JS: Hindi mo maiwasan because people see you on TV, so inevitably you begin to develop this celebrity (stature). I think the question is whether you are using your celebrity to do good.

Hindi ka naman conscious na gusto mong maging sikat. Ang lagi mong iniisip... ay kung tama ba 'yung story mo... But if, in the process, you become more familiar to viewers and... you become a household name, then it's good because you gain some stature and find more opportunities. You have an easier time getting your stories. May mga magbubukas ng mga pinituan or even windows. If people start listening because they have come to trust you, then you can open their minds, inform, enlighten, even educate, them.

I would like to believe that most of us in GMA News and Public Affairs have healthy egos, hopefully wala pang monsters. It should always be about the story and not about us. Iyon ang isa sa mga values na sana hindi malimutan ng aming mga reporters.

(weekdays after "Machete") on GMA 7, he falls for Regine Velasquez's drag queen character.

What does he think of drag queens? "I salute them," he said. "It's not easy to wear a flamboyant costume with heavy wigs and still be poised, but they manage to do so. To top it all, they surprise the audience with their wit when it comes to relevant social issues."

Any funny moment during their shoot? "Nahirapan ako batukan si Reg sa eksena," he said, chuckling. "Naka-eight takes ako to get the scene right. It was one of our first days of taping so I wasn't able to fully internalize yet that it was a man I was supposed to be hitting."

Lovey-dovey

Claudine Barretto and Raymart Santiago were spotted being lovey-dovey in their flight en route to Hong Kong. That should finally put an end to rumors that there's trouble in paradise for the couple. So, is their marriage now rock solid and not on the rocks?

Who knows?

Mark Gil sent me this text message in reaction to my item about his daughter Andi Eigenmann dating Erap's son Jake: "As far as I know, Andi and Jake are childhood friends because Jane's (Jaclyn Jose) sister and Jake's mom Laarni are close. I've known Jake since he was a kid. But then again, who knows? Hehe."



Willie Revillame

recalled telling the TV host that he (Revillame) was "probably going to be better off if he produced his own show and be an independent producer like Oprah Winfrey." Winfrey is best known for her self-titled, multi-awarded show, produced by her own company, Harpo.

During the meeting, Gozon said, he asked Revillame about the latter's relationship with ABS-CBN "to have a clearer understanding of the kind of legal problem that he was going to have to face."

"That was how preliminary that meeting was," Gozon stressed. "I did tell him, 'I'm the man,' pero biruan lang namin 'yon. It was my way of saying na ako na ang pinakamataas in GMA 7 that he could talk with. The next I heard from Reyno was that Revillame was going to sign up with TV5."

Inquirer Entertainment called Revillame, but the TV host refused to make any more comments on the subject.

Willie, John friendship turns sour

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

The excitement John Estrada feels for his Feb. 26 wedding is dampened by the misunderstanding he has with Willie Revillame. A groom in gloom?

Things turned sour between the best buddies when John and their close friend Randy Santiago accepted ABS-CBN's offer to host its new noontime show, "Happy Yippee Yehey," which premieres on Feb. 12. Willie felt that he was bypassed because he already told John and Randy that he is cooking up a show for the three of them on TV5.

"Nabanggit sa akin ni Willie yun," John explained. "But there was no concrete offer from the network. *Plano pa lang ang lahat. Usapang barkada 'yun* when he said *na siya ang bahala sa amin ni Randy*. I appreciate all his efforts.

"When ABS-CBN's offer came, Randy and I were really gonna talk to him, *kaso nauna-han na kami*. I'm really sorry *na nasaktan siya*. When I heard he got sick *kasi naapektuhan siya sa nangyari*, I texted him *na sana maniwala siya na talagang pinagdadasal ko na gumaling siya*.

"*Nasaktan din ako* when he said on the air *na di mag-re-rate ang show namin*. Though I know outburst *lang niya 'yun. Di ko naman hangad maging isang Willie Revillame. Gusto*

ko lang magtrabaho nang maayos para masuportahan ko ang mga anak ko at ang magiging asawa ko. 'Di niya ako kalaban. Nasa kanya na lahat. Masaya ako for him *at alam ko kahit may tampo siya, happy din siya na umaasenso na rin ako. Mahal ko si Willie kahit ano pang intriga ang dumating.*"

How does he feel about Willie's backing out as best man in his wedding? "I'm still hoping against hope that he changes his mind," John said. "But just like my other guests, I won't force him if he doesn't want to attend, even if it won't be the same without him. *Basta tuloy ang kasal!*"

Will they be able to patch things up? "Only time will tell. Normal *naman sa magkakaibigan na magtampuhan*," he said. "*Mainit pa ngayon ang issue pero pag lumamig na si Willie, alam ko maiintindihan din niya ang naging desisyon ko. Tra-baho lang talaga ito.*"

Sweet tweet

This tweet of Zsazsa Padilla caught my attention: "Any ideas what I can give Dolphy for Valentine's? Not Viagra. Channeling Dolphy's inner geek. Please give me an iPhone for V-day. I think it's hopeless. He has no inner techie geekiness."

Amid nasty rumors about Tito Dolphy's health problems, it's so heartwarming to know

that his romance with Zsa is alive and well.

Birthday present

Solenn Heussaff, one of Richard Gutierrez's leading ladies in "My Valentine Girls," gave him a painting for his birthday. It's a portrait of Chard which Solenn made herself.

If a picture paints a thousand words, then their long kissing scene in the movie would paint a thousand feelings. In the V-day trilogy, Solenn and Chard are paired in the episode "BBFF," with Lovi Poe as the third party in the love triangle.

Richard and Rhian Ramos top-bill the episode "Soulmates"; and in the post-apocalyptic episode, Chard stars with Eugene Domingo and Jillian Ward. The feel of each episode will inspire you to get rid of emotional baggage and just let love be love.

As Chard puts it, "'Di naman hinahanap ang love. Kusang dumataray yan sa tamang panahon.'

Ruffa Gutierrez let me in on the most romantic thing his brother ever did for a girl. "He surprised a girl and whisked her away to an unknown romantic location complete with accommodations and all."

Not homophobic

Dingdong Dantes is not homophobic at all. In his new comedy series "I Heart You Pare"

Maharlika – Opinyon

Reyes' Ides of March

Former Armed Forces Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes was a doomed man as soon as he walked into the Senate blue ribbon committee hearing on Jan. 27, days before he shot himself in the chest last Tuesday. It was a moment when he was most vulnerable in his public life—his Ides of March, a day of treachery and of unbridled character assassination in the annals of Philippine congressional investigations carried out as “in aid of legislation.”

Once the most powerful man in the country as AFP chief of staff, who toppled President Joseph Estrada in January 2001, by leading the military in withdrawing support from the corrupt Estrada government, Reyes walked in absolutely unprotected to testify as a “resource person” in the blue ribbon investigation of alleged corruption over military funds. The investigation had nothing to do with him, at the beginning. It was about another case involving Carlos Garcia, the former AFP comptroller accused of plunder who had struck a plea bargain agreement with prosecutors.

Reyes had no premonition what was in store for him at the Senate hearing, although it is common knowledge that congressional investigations are the abattoir where legislators abuse invited guests, insult them, humiliate them, browbeat them, bully them and rob them of their dignity; an arena where witnesses are exposed to merciless trial by publicity, where all pretensions to due process of law and fair play are thrown to the four winds; where legislators turn

into accusers, prosecutors, judges and juries—in a procedure more cruel and arbitrary than the Holy Inquisition. It was his lowest moment of vulnerability. He had retired from public service, especially the military, his power base, and was no longer a Cabinet minister, a position from which he could fight back.

Reyes was dragged into the plunder case when retired Lt. Col. George Rabusa, a former military budget officer, testified that Reyes and two other former AFP chiefs received huge “send-off” money when they retired. Rabusa said Reyes was given up to P50 million as “pabaon” when he retired.

Reyes was invited following allegations made by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV that Garcia, who is facing plunder charges, was just protecting a “powerful” person. Rabusa, who admitted to receiving cuts from the money, said the giving of send-off money had become a tradition in the AFP. Reyes denied the allegations, saying he was never involved in the preparation of the funds.

Senate President Pro Tempore Jinggoy Estrada presented Rabusa as a “surprise witness,” prompting Reyes to accuse Estrada of getting back at him for withdrawing military support from his father, then President Estrada. In his opening statement at the hearing, Reyes claimed that Rabusa, who was comptroller during his term as AFP chief, had turned whistle-blower and even dragged his family into the alleged pay-offs to ingratiate himself with the Senate and become a state witness.

Retired Commodore Rex Robles, a confidant of Reyes, claimed that the general just inherited a system.

The suicide of Reyes highlighted another sensitive issue: the abuses arising from the inquisitorial manner of congressional investigations. Reyes was repeatedly scolded by Estrada for insisting that he be allowed to directly question Rabusa. “Can I ask Colonel Rabusa, if, during my time as chief of staff, I became greedy? Did I ask money from him, officially or unofficially?”

Estrada cut him short: “This is not an issue of greed. The issue

is, if you collected money, if you were corrupt as chief of the Armed Forces.”

“Who cares if you were generous?” Trillanes weighed in to join the gang-up, when Reyes complained that his reputation was being attacked. He angrily told Reyes: “If you are so concerned about your name, you should have fixed yourself in office.”

Trillanes could hardly conceal his gloating. “This is the time of reckoning,” he said. “You better find very good lawyers.”

The unkindest cut came from Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, who described Reyes as “one of the greatest morons in history,” if he knew nothing about military corruption under his watch.

Reyes was completely devastated and isolated in the Senate. No one defended him. His former underlings in the military were betraying him. Reyes later told Robles, “There’s nothing I can do. They are determined to crush me.”

In an interview with the Inquirer, days before he committed suicide, Reyes talked about a “smear campaign” against him and how it had taken a toll on his wife and children. “I can take everything they say against me, but not against my family. They should not be dragging my family into this controversy.”

He said Robles, who was his compadre, was being used by Jinggoy Estrada to wage political vendetta.

From the accounts of his friends and family, there is no doubt that Reyes was crushed by shocking testimonies in the Senate. When Julius Caesar went to the Roman Senate on the Ides of March (March 15 on the Roman calendar), senators, fearing the threat of his dictatorship, ganged up on him and stabbed him 23 times. In the Philippine Senate, any citizen summoned to testify faces the grave risk of character assassination.

What drove Reyes to take his life is a matter of conjecture. Whether the inquisition in the Senate pushed him to the edge is hard to say. Senators are washing their hands of any responsibility for his death.

EDITORIAL

Who to blame

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Many Filipinos are trying to make sense of the completely unexpected suicide of Angelo Reyes, a highly accomplished man who once had his hand on the levers not only of power but of history.

For many of us, however, this search for meaning is little different from the so-called blame game. Many of us think: If we can only identify who to blame for his death, perhaps we can reach some sort of understanding—about Reyes, and about the politics which can lead someone like him to take his own life.

There are, to be sure, those who actively play the blame game because they seek, either to make political capital out of Reyes’ death, or to derive a justification for their point of view or political position from it.

For instance, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez. When the committee on justice of the House of Representatives decided to push through with its last hearing on the issue of the Carlos F. Garcia plea bargain agreement on the morning of Reyes’ suicide, Gutierrez took the occasion to assert that Reyes would not have taken his life had Congress merely waited for the Sandiganbayan’s ruling on the controversial agreement. Aside from the sheer effrontery of confusing the facts (there would have been no congressional investigations if she had not entered into the agreement in the first place), Gutierrez’s statement is unprecedented for someone who does not occupy a political office; she chose to put a political spin on the unfortunate incident.

There is certainly no question that the lack of civility in congressional investigations, especially in the Senate, has grown only worse over the years. But we find it hard to believe that it was because Reyes was treated with marked disdain and disrespect that he took his own life. To assert that it was this treatment that pushed him over the edge is in effect to call Reyes a coward, to mistake his sense of pride for mere prickliness.

But the view that the Senate investigation of corruption in the military amounted to trial by publicity is both unfortunate and wrong. A public official’s actions must not only stand the most stringent scrutiny, they must be periodically subjected to the disinfecting daylight of official inquiry. And this process must be open to the public—because the senators and congressmen, the prosecutors and judges, the fact-finding commissions and special task forces, are themselves subject to the same scrutiny.

In other words, the attempt to pin the blame on the investigators or on the witnesses summoned to take part or on the media reporting the progress of the investigation misses the essential point. If we must find out who is to blame, we should focus our attention on the wrongdoers. We repeat: Not those who made the courageous decision to speak the truth about corruption, despite the very real risk to life and limb, but those who were or are corrupt. In the case of the Garcia plea bargain and the related case of corruption in the military, we should pin the blame on the officers who misused government funds and the auditors who looked the other way.

This, we believe, is the only real way to make sense of Reyes’ sudden, shocking death.

Reyes was invited following allegations made by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV that Garcia, who is facing plunder charges, was just protecting a “powerful” person. Rabusa, who admitted to receiving cuts from the money, said the giving of send-off money had become a tradition in the AFP. Reyes denied the allegations, saying he was never involved in the preparation of the funds.

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Angie and Heidi

Change does not happen in a vacuum. Great change is preceded by a deep desire for it, and that desire is triggered by an environment that suppresses and oppresses either physical freedom or the aspiration for growth by the human spirit.

Many social scientists and modern thinkers have been pointing to an era of great change. They do not point to change through election or revolution; rather, they see this change as a generational initiative which would result in influencing elections and revolutions. To them, a shift in human consciousness is emerging very visibly among the young from the most developed nations and the breathtaking leaps of technology - especially in the field of information and communication.

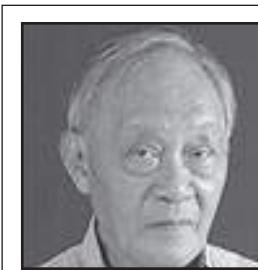
Indeed, the candidacy, campaign and election of Noynoy Aquino is a sign that Filipinos have been drawn into that global wave for change. The most disinterested and unprepared of politicians is catapulted to the presidency by his mother’s death and the strength of people’s volunteerism. I have called it destiny, but I also see it as a harmonious contribution to an angst for change that is global in character.

The descent of the Philippines to being the most corrupt in our region of Asia and the horrible rise of hunger incidences have laid the strong foundation for not only change but great change, even revolution. It is when there is most pain when the need for most change finds reason. Corruption and poverty must have had to really worsen for a moral decay and physical pain to threaten a national soul. And in the Philippines, they did.

Just as political change was ushered in using the candidacy and presidency of Noynoy Aquino as key symbols, moral and ethical change are using the personal circumstances of Angie Reyes and Heidi Mendoza as major expressions. Angie was accused by his own subordinates of receiving huge sums of money which belonged to the people, or to the armed forces to which he was chief-of-staff. The Senate hearings where these accusations were hurled had moved to a stage where insinuations were leading to his wife, contained in reports of frequent travel with a wife of another general who went on a property-buying binge in the United States. Obviously as a reaction to the adverse developments happening to him and his family, Angie committed suicide.

In sharp contrast, Heidi Mendoza emerged from the ranks of the ordinary and spoke out bravely against the travails that dedicated and honest government employees in the Commission on Audit had to go through to do their duty. She bared the circumstances that made it difficult, even impossible, for a special auditor like her to do a good job - circumstances where her own superiors provided the obstacles to honest performance. From the most senior of leadership, and naming them, she was discouraged to pursue her line of strict audit and seeing to it that her findings would result to appropriate action by her institution.

And so the beginning drama of great change has begun using the



Analysis

By AMANDO DORONILA

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

public lives of two individuals who were once public servants. As always, the most interesting and powerful changes in human history have always been expressed through personal lives and public events. Today, it is Angie Reyes and Heidi Mendoza that are the major players on stage, together with two generals and two colonels from the AFP. There are several minor players and even yet-unnamed personalities who will eventually take center stage. A drama such as what is unfolding today promises much more.

The family of Angie Reyes has naturally reacted as most anguished and angry, with one son condemning criticisms and accusations against his late father as coming from the ignorant, the envious and those who had nothing better to do. Yet, the unusual ending of a very public life, his last two weeks and taking his own life, will generate even more speculation and commentary. In a calmer moment, Angie’s family will realize that millions talk about the man because he willingly led a life that opened him to public awareness and entered situations that earned him controversies. Most of these millions are Filipinos who are neither ignorant, envious or have nothing better to do. They are the Filipinos whom Angie served.

In fact, the family of Angie Reyes should anticipate that Angie’s death may have put a stop to many possibilities but will not be able to do so with everything. The emerging catharsis, though, will not find them alone in the eye of the storm. Many more will rue the day when they took lightly the oath they took as public servant and held quiet disdain for duty and honor. This moment of great change will not solve all the perennial problems of the Philippines, but it will create shock waves and instill fear in enough dishonest hearts for great change to begin.

Heidi is now a light, proof that an ordinary Filipino can be extraordinary when the moment urgently asks for it. The path of heroism has been the only way that the Filipino race has traversed from one tragedy to the other without being totally destroyed in body and soul. It is people like Heidi who hear a cry of help from the deep, and valiantly respond to it against all odds. The future does not show us all things, nor guarantee anything. But Heidi, like all other heroes before her, have already made their mark, their contribution to the perpetuation of nobility even when many public officials have forgotten what honor means.

From one present moment to the next present moment, a people’s journey back to the light unfolds. There is reason for skepticism as many past moments offered great change but did not seem to have succeeded. I believe they served their purpose, maybe not fully, but enough to be bridges to the next moment of great change. We are where we are now because of Edsa One, of Edsa Dos, of every controversy that made us cringe at our cowardice for not standing up for what is right but kept us hoping that one day we will.

That day, I hope, is today.



Glimpses

By JOSE MA. MONTELIBANO

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Samu't Sari



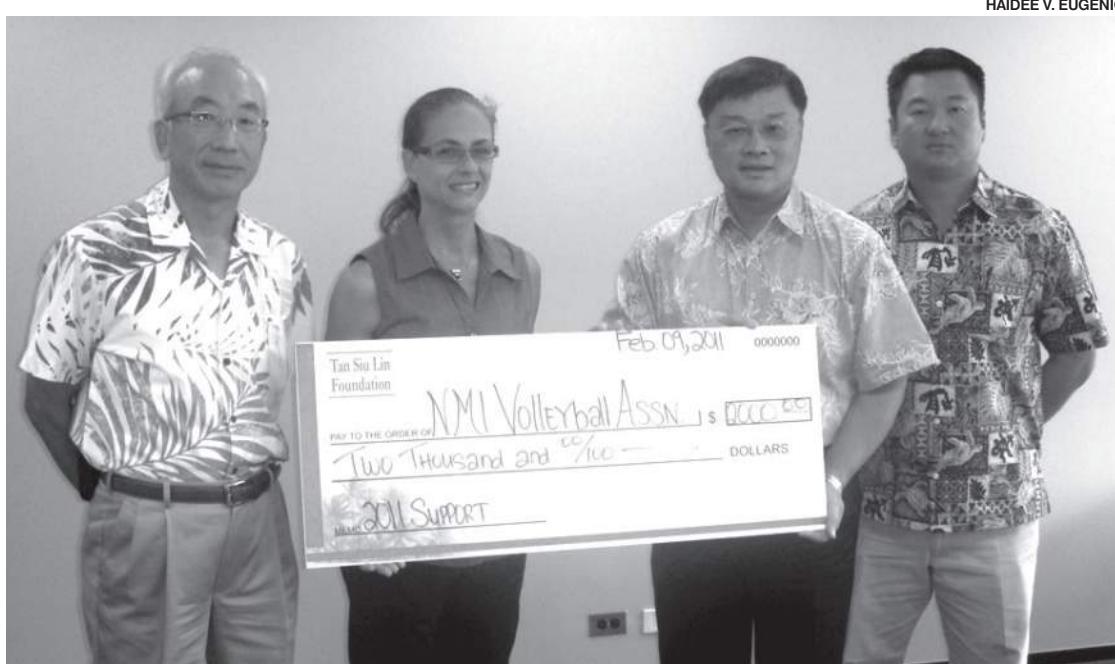
'LOVE ONE ANOTHER'

Flanked by members of the Worldwide Marriage Encounter and priests, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial signs a proclamation declaring Feb. 13 World Marriage Day at the Mount Carmel Curia in Chalan Kanoa Thursday afternoon. Fitial, during the signing, said he has always been fond of the theme for the 25th World Marriage Day, "Love One Another," a simple but challenging decision that people make daily.

TAN HOLDINGS DONATION

Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan, second from right, presents a check for \$2,000 to the NMI Volleyball Association in preparation for their 2011 Marianas Cup, which will be held at the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan this month. Present to receive the check were NMVA representatives Laurie Peterka, second from left, and Ed Cho, right, and Fiesta general manager B.K. Park, left.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

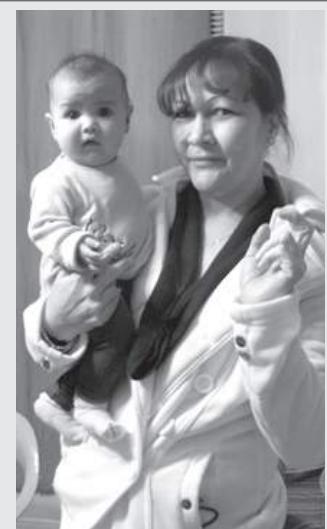
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Advanced happy 18th birthday to Kathy Carl Sotto, who turns 18 on Sunday, Feb. 13, 2011! We love you! Greetings come from Papa, Mama, Mike Romnick and family.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Happy birthday grandma Dorothy S. Concepcion! Lots of love from all your grandkids.

NEW CHRISTIAN

Happy Christening to EJ M. Deleon Guerrero Jr. on February 12, 2011! May the Lord continue to guide and bless you in the coming years! Congratulations! Greetings come from the Tereyama families.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



FOOTBALL PLAYERS' PARTY

Shirley's Football Club holds its first get-together party on Feb. 5, 2011, on the grounds of the Oleai Elementary School where more than 50 youth players showed up with their parents for the Youth Football Spring League registration. The club also donated 10 soccer balls to the school during the occasion.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



ELEPHANT RIDE

Michelle Caleon, left, and Venus Grenio of Serenity Salon and Spa enjoy an elephant ride at the Maesa Elephant Camp in Thailand last month.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MARIANAS HEALTH GIVES

Marianas Health donates \$1,500 to Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School. From left, Marianas Health president George Cruz; PTA parent representative Melissa Gatharneg; PTA member Sherlyn Jones; and PTA president Vince Castro.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



*Providing Quality
Experienced Health
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BOOK LAUNCH

Far right, education commissioner Rita A. Sablan and CNMI historian Don Farrell share a light moment after Wednesday's press briefing on the launch of Farrell's latest opus, *History of the Mariana Islands to Partition*.

MONETH G. DEPOSA



YoungStyle

Handmade gifts back in style

By KATHY ANTONIOTTI

AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

This year, homespun holidays are making a comeback and handmade gifts are more popular than ever. Some families are feeling an economic pinch and children may not have the money to exchange gifts with friends.

One Creativity for Kids craft kit by Faber-Castell will give you enough supplies to make lots of ornaments for friends, such as shrinky dinks, ceramic, playfoam and photo frame ornaments.

This beaded snowflake ornament is beautiful and comes with enough beads to make six original snowflake designs.

I also used a brown paper lunch sack and a few other supplies for a handmade gift bag that is a dead ringer for Rudolph. In just a few minutes, you can make enough bags to hold all the gifts you want to give your friends.

Creativity for Kids kits cost about \$19.99 and can be found at department and craft stores. Or use these directions to build your snowflakes

and reindeer gift bags.

Supplies you will need:

1 Beaded Snowflake Ornament kit by Faber Castell, or an assortment of beads from your local craft store.

1 floral stem wire for each ornament.

6 wire cap ends for each ornament.

1 6-inch, thin ribbon to hang the ornament.

Remove the wire snowflake form or ask an adult to use a wire cutter to divide a floral stem into three equal pieces.

Twist the wires together at their centers if you are building your own to form six equal sides.

Place a towel on your work surface so the beads will stay put.

To make symmetrical snowflakes, you will need to repeat the same beading pattern on each spoke of the snowflake form. You can create your own design, or follow the design on the box to make it look like the one pictured here.

Thread the beads onto the wire and

place an end cap on each end when you are finished with each spoke.

Add the hanging ribbon by knotting the center of the ribbon between two end beads, cap the end and tie the ends into a bow.

Supplies you will need for reindeer bags:

1 brown paper lunch sack.

Two large wiggle eyes.

1 large red or black pompon.

Dark brown card stock.

Glue.

Scissors.

Fold the bag in half lengthwise and round off the corners of the open end of the bag. Use the scraps to cut out two ears.

Open the bag and fold the top { of the bag down toward the closed end of the bag.

Draw antlers on the card stock and cut out.

Glue the ears and the antlers to the inside fold of the bag.

Glue on the nose and wiggle eyes on the outside of the bag and set aside until dry.



A beaded snowflake ornament is a unique gift you can make for the holidays. A reindeer bag can hold special gifts.

MCT

Out of this world birthday ideas: The only limits are energy, imagination and money

By AMY WILSON

THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

There are three things you need to know about birthday parties today. 1) Have a theme; 2) Do not waver from the theme; and, 3) Embrace the theme like your life depends upon it.

That is, you cannot have Sponge Bob show up at a Princess Tea Party at which you are playing Pin The Web on Spiderman's forearm. A SpongeBob party requires all the SpongeBob stuff and an appearance by the yellow absorbent one and maybe a little tap dance from Sandy Cheeks, a cake in the shape of a pineapple and a little tray of Krabby Patties to take home.

Don't ask why. Children live in a themed world. They like consistency. They like coordination. They like understanding their own party.

When we asked professional party-givers in Orange County, Calif., to tell us what was the trend for this year, they all agreed on theme-tyranny, and a simultaneous shift from private party facilities—Chuck E. Cheese, Scooter's Jungle, GameWorks—toward home parties.

Darcy Flye has done the last two and is in the midst of planning the whole children-as-fish experience for Jordan's next. Darcy, a La Habra, Calif., mother of three boys under 5, says parties get cheaper, she's told, when the parents aren't invited and they

focus on the birthday child," says Cheri Mathews, owner of StarStruck Entertainment, a party planner based in Brea, Calif. "The time comes to cut the cake and you can't find half the kids because they're out on the equipment."

The birthday kiddo ends up pooped but not feted.

Not good, especially since children's parties are singularly unaffected by recessionary times and since the average amount spent on a party these days—based on a completely random survey—is around \$25 per guest. Don't have a stroke. The creativity of the party mom can offset a lot of costs, but things tend to add up. (And of course, many can spend a great deal more than \$25 per, but we don't know those people and aren't invited to their parties.)

Lastly, parental party-givers are asking kids what they want to do at their party. Pretend to be a fish? Pet a snake? Play with a mess of puppies?

She is our hero.

Now, in other news from the birthday front:

GOODIE BAGS

Best new goodie-bag item: Sandy Candy

It's a craft. It's a candy. It's a memoir. You take a container of flavored and dyed sugar and, using amazing displays of artistic talent and eating a lot of par-

ty time, you layer it into a bottle and make a beautiful sunset or something. Then you eat it.

Do's and don'ts of goodie bags:

Do include something to eat, something to play with, something to wear/tattoo/jangle and some memento that screams "I went to Joey's party."

Don't forget the Ring Pops.

Never include candy cigarettes or a living goldfish—you make no friends among the parents with these.

Do label the bags with the kids' names. Kids open them before they're supposed to, and a favorite impromptu party game is trade-you-a-baby-beanie-for-two-horse-shaped-cookies.

Do keep track of what you spend per bag. Give yourself a limit and stick to it.

THEME IDEAS

Best low-cost idea (for the under-10 set) we've heard lately: A Crocodile Hunter party. Kids get binoculars, safari hats and a handful of reptile food and head for the nearest exotic pet store for a free—make sure the store knows you're coming—tour of all things slimy, scaly and spitting.

Best low-cost idea (for

tweens) we've heard lately: The Swap. Invite them all to bring the clothes, accessories and shoes they are sick of or have outgrown or will simply never have anything to do with.

Throw all clothes in the middle. Party activity: Everybody tries on everything and models it for laughs. All the party-giver has to provide is a big whopping shopping bag for guests to take home their finds.

Birthday girl gets dibs if there's a rush for that one great miniskirt. Goodie bags can just be chock-full of edible jewelry.

Worst low-cost idea we've heard lately: The party pack, available at Target. All the stuff you need for your child's birthday, six guests, \$9.99. Really, you can do better.

Best boy ideas: The messy party. Offered up by StarStruck Entertainment, this requires a back yard and tolerance. Think ice cream sundae building on each others' heads, water balloon fights, sticky stuff and feathers, maybe some mud.

Best Web site for birthday

party ideas: www.birthdaypartyideas.com

Best comeback characters of 2004: Strawberry Shortcake, the Care Bears.

Best idea if your child thinks of it first: In an effort to fight the excess, ask the birthday kid to give whatever you would have spent on a party to a food bank or children's shelter or to underserved schools. You

wouldn't be alone in this.

Best commercial use of too-much party money:

The hot-air balloon party. You can't fly in Orange County, but you can tether a balloon to the Earth in an agreeable park, let kids climb aboard and let them all rise about 50 feet. Prices vary, usually booking two hours at a time.

The spa party. For teenage girls, services include manicures, pedicures, facials, catered lunch, makeup lessons, even nutrition seminars. The party is customized by the party-giver; price varies.

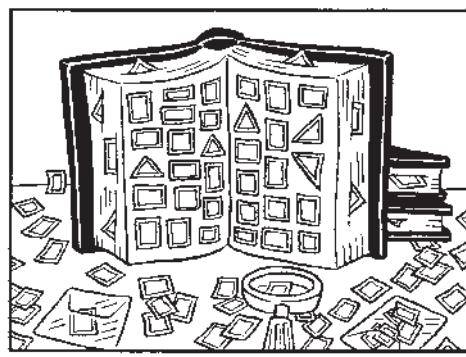
The cooking party. Invite kids in to make a three-course meal of the birthday kid's choosing or just make chocolate desserts. A chef's staff teaches and supervises all the preparation, from start to finish, with guests doing all the mixing and kneading and basting and icing. Price varies.

THREE RANDOM TIPS: Don't give fabulous prizes for winning Pin the Hammer on Bob the Builder. Why? Then everybody wants a fabulous prize.

Find one theme too limiting?

Combine. Make a Ballerina Barbie beach party and play a game where you hide her little high heels in the sand.

Parents usually accompany kids to parties until they are, say, 8. You might want to be sure there's enough food, enough drink and yet enough incentive to leave when it's over.



A STAMP STUMPER! You have 30 seconds to lick this challenge. See if you can correctly count all the postage stamps pictured.

ANSWER: Our count was 80. Did you miss any?

FIND THE HIDDEN CITY

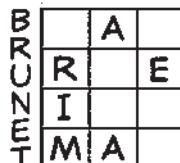
in this man's sentence!

THE NEW TESTING METHOD CAUSED MY SCORES TO BE SWOLLEN IN GRADE SCHOOL!

ANSWER: The city is ... LENIN GRAD ... (Russia)

FIND THE SEVEN WORDS PUZZLE! In the word square at the right, we've removed six of the letters to spell out the word "BRUNET." See if you can replace these letters in the squares so that you will have four three-letter words across and three four-letter words down. Time limit: 60 seconds.

Answers: (Across) bat, nee, ire, man. (Down) Brum, aura, teen.

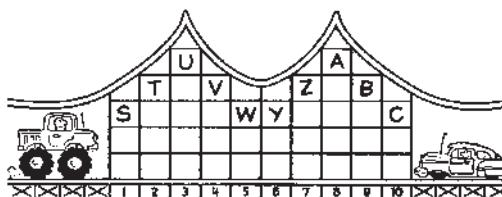


Answers: 1. Sep., 2. Tact, 3. Upend, 4. Veed, 5. Web, 6. Yek, 7. Zest, 8. Accord, 9. Blip, 10. Go.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

A WORD BRIDGE



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Illustrated by David Coulson



1. A gullible person (sl.).
2. Able to speak without offending.
3. To turn over.
4. To change direction; swerve.
5. A humorous person.
6. Wild, shaggy-haired animal.
7. Spirited enjoyment; gusto.
8. Unpleasantly sharp taste or smell.
9. Found on a radar screen.
10. A shy or modest person.

FIND THE HIDDEN CITY

in this man's sentence!

THE NEW TESTING METHOD CAUSED MY SCORES TO BE SWOLLEN IN GRADE SCHOOL!

ANSWER: The city is ... LENIN GRAD ... (Russia)

Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ It was Irish author Oscar Wilde who made the following sage observation: "There are only two kinds of people who are really fascinating: people who know absolutely everything, and people who know absolutely nothing."

■ The sun is one million times the size of the earth.

■ Coffee was first discovered around 1000 A.D. by Arabs. At the time, it was used strictly for medicinal or religious purposes.

■ Harper Lee's iconic novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" celebrated the 50th anniversary of its publication last year. The film will celebrate its anniversary next year, marking 50 years since Gregory Peck portrayed Atticus Finch, whom the American Film Institute named the greatest movie hero of the 20th century. Harper Lee was so impressed with Gregory Peck's performance, in fact, that she gave the actor her deceased father's pocket watch. Peck, however, lost it.

■ Before the roller coaster was invented, some inspired entrepreneur began building deliberately undulating tracks for cars. Early thrill-seekers would pay a fee to drive on them.

■ Those who calculate such things say that the odds of the same number coming out on top in eight successive rolls of a six-sided die are 1 in 1,679,616.

■ Fifth-century conqueror Attila the Hun died on his wedding night, though it's unclear from the records whether he died from internal bleeding caused by too much drinking or was murdered by his bride.

■ If you're like 24 percent of women in the United States, you shave every day.

■ In 1978, the endangered Hawaiian bird the palila was named as the plaintiff in a lawsuit. In *Palila v. Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources*, the bird won.

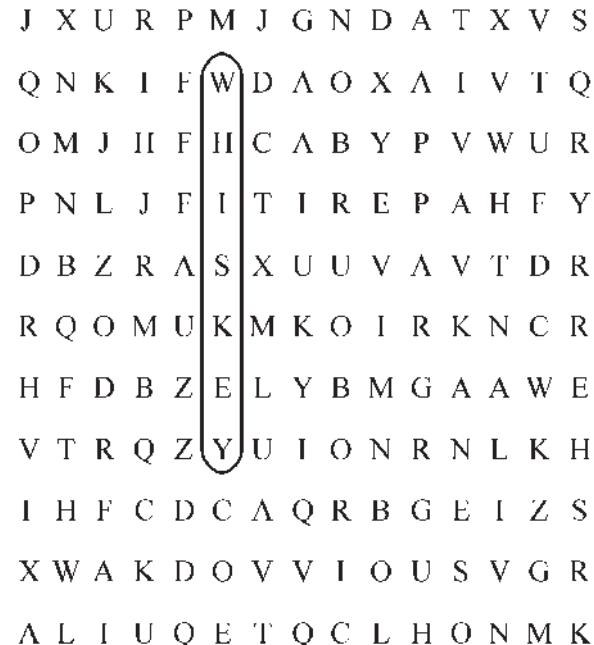
■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "The saying 'Getting there is half the fun' became obsolete with the advent of commercial airlines." —Henry J. Tillman

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MAGIC MAZE

DISTILLED SPIRITS



Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions—forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Akvavit	Cognac	Liqueur	Vermouth
Aperitif	Gin	Mezcal	Vodka
Bourbon	Grappa	Rum	Whiskey
Brandy	Horlka	Sherry	

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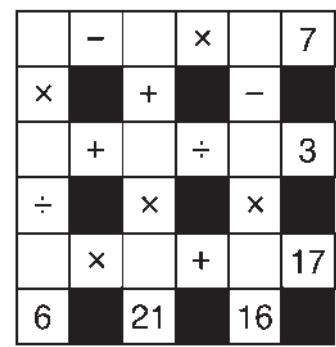
GO FIGURE!

by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

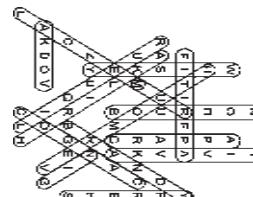
DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

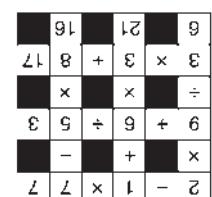


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MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER



Don't sweat the vet

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I have to admit, I have not taken my two cats to the veterinarian as often as I should. Last year, I skipped their annual shots and just kept them inside, and they didn't get annual physicals. The visits just cost too much. Fortunately, neither of them got sick. I'm on a fixed income, so I need to plan every expense. Please don't judge me too harshly—I love my cats!—Caring Mama in Wheeling, W.Va.

DEAR CARING MAMA: It might surprise you to know that many of my readers share your dilemma. They're worried about the cost of health care for their pets—even routine shots and check-ups—and they fret about what to do if their pet gets sick or injured. And as pet owners' incomes have declined in recent years, so have the number of visits.

In fact, Bayer Animal Health recently compiled a Veterinary Care Usage Study that found some interesting results:

■ 53 percent of pet owners think costs are usually much higher than expected.

■ 63 percent of dog owners and 68 percent of cat owners question the need for regular veterinary care.

■ 33 percent of dog owners and 41 percent of cat owners would not take their pet to the vet if vaccines were not needed.

■ One-third of cats have not been to the veterinarian in the past year.



Paw's corner

by Sam Mazzotta

■ 56 percent of veterinarians said they were getting fewer visits from pet owners in 2009 and 2010.

It all adds up to riskier times for pets. So, what can a financially strapped pet owner do? Start by talking to your vet about financial difficulties—many will try to work out a pricing structure that fits your ability to pay. Look for low-cost pet health and vaccination clinics (check www.PawsCorner.com for regular updates on 2011 rabies clinics around the United States). Check with senior and low-income assistance centers in your city or town for pet care assistance programs.

■ ■ ■

Send your questions to ask@pawscorner.com, or write to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. Visit www.pawscorner.com for more pet care information.

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Enjoy taste of summer with tomato pie

It tastes like summer when it's not. Looks like pizza, but it's not. So, what is it? Tomato pie! It's our new family favorite for a winter supper when we long for something with a fresh and zesty Italian flavor. I serve it with a healthy green salad and crunchy French bread. Hungry yet?

Just pick up fresh tomatoes, garlic cloves and rub some fresh basil leaves between your fingers, and be transported to a warmer season as you prepare a tasty meal with your kids.

TOMATO PIE

Ingredients:

■ 1 9-inch refrigerated ready-made pie crust, or prepare an easy homemade crust (see below)

■ 1 1/3 cups shredded Italian-blend cheese or mozzarella

■ 2-4 cloves fresh garlic, minced

■ 2 tablespoons fine dry Italian-seasoned breadcrumbs

■ 2 pounds fresh ripe tomatoes, cut into slices or wedges (about 6 cups)

■ 1/2 teaspoon salt

■ 1/2 cup chopped fresh basil

from oven and place on a wire rack.

4. Sprinkle with basil leaves. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

ALTERNATE HOMEMADE CRUST

Ingredients:

■ 4 ounces cream cheese, softened

■ 1/2 cup butter, softened

■ 1 cup all-purpose flour

■ Pinch of salt

Directions:

Place the cream cheese and butter in a large bowl. Add flour and salt. Work together with a pastry blender. Gather the soft dough into a ball with your hands and press into a 9-inch pie pan. This is a perfect job for your child to do. Simply set the ball in the middle of the pan, and press the dough out in all directions to extend slightly over the rim. Flute the edges with fingers. Prick holes with fork. Bake at 425 F for 8 minutes before step 2.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning series "Donna's Day" is airing on public television nationwide. To find more of her creative family recipes and activities, visit www.donnasdaday.com and link to the NEW Donna's Day Facebook fan page. Her latest book is "Donna Erickson's Fabulous Funstuff for Families."

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Life & Style

Sports Illustrated swimwear ka-ching for designers

MIAMI (AP)—The Sports Illustrated Swimsuit edition isn't just about sexy to fashion designers lucky enough to make it in. There's a loud ka-ching for years to come.

"Everybody opens up that issue and goes, 'Wow where can I get this suit?' We have a great response when it hits the newsstands," said Simon Southwood, a repeat who expects seven of his suits to grace the famous pages.

Southwood, in San Diego, California, has already presold to stores in anticipation of the big reveal Feb. 14 on David Letterman's show, followed by newsstand sales the next day. The location of the famous shoots and who makes the cover are top secret until then.

"Consumers love to follow what's hot, what's glamorous, what's beautiful," Southwood said. "The first question that the sales rep will ask is, 'What did you get into Sports Illustrated this year?'"

Southwood and his Sauvage Swimwear in San Diego, California, are known for cutout designs that average \$200 each. He has made it into the blockbuster edition for more than a decade, but getting in the first time around was up to luck.

"It's kind of a crapshoot in a way," Southwood said. "It's just whatever catches their eye and what looks good on that model."

Model Anne V., who has been in the last seven editions, considers herself a master of the distinct look she describes as part sexy, part smiley.

"It's very easy for us to do sexy. That's our job to create a character that people want. Sports Illustrated, they don't want just sexy. They want that girl next door look," she said.

Designer Lisa Curran in New



This September 2009 photo courtesy of Riccardo Tinelli/Sports Illustrated shows model Esti Ginzburg in a pool during a photo shoot at Amanbagh Resort in Rajasthan, India, for the 2010 edition of Sports Illustrated Swimsuit. This year's edition is out on Feb. 15 and, of course, the cover and inside photos remain a well-kept secret. Ginzburg is wearing a swimsuit by Lisa Curran. AP

York has been in business for 12 years and in the issue every year except one. In the beginning, it really helped her business, providing her credibility as a designer.

"I think over time it translates into sales," Curran said. "I also think it depends on the shot."

Curran's secret: She cuts bathing suits smaller just for Sports Illustrated. "Less is more for the issue. It doesn't always translate into that for real life," she said.

Her suits retail for \$160 to \$190. She tests them on real women, trying to design with fit in mind. "You will be surprised how many random people will e-mail me and say they saw your swimsuit in

Sports Illustrated."

Sisters Michele Letarte Ross and Lisa Letarte Cabrinha run their bicoastal company Letarte with Michele in Fairfield, Connecticut, and Lisa in Maui, Hawaii. In 2005, one of their suits they've dubbed the candy red bikini was worn by Carolyn Murphy and selected for the cover.

That, the sisters said, is the Oscar of their industry.

"The cache being in Sports Illustrated is difficult to measure. It not only produces business, it elevated the brand to become a recognizable name in a very, very saturated industry," Letarte Ross said.

This will be their 11th year

getting in. Sometimes, the editors will call and request a special suit, like the one made of beer bottle caps. For a western shoot, they made a suit out of a Pendleton blanket.

"The majority of the pieces are straight out of our collection. That's the one nice thing about the collection, we design for our consumer," Letarte Ross said.

Their suits average about \$180.

"The one great thing about the issue is that it stays on newsstands for almost five months. It's the type of magazine that no one ever throws out," Letarte Ross said.

The person who makes the ultimate decision is the magazine's swimsuit editor, Diane

for many fantasy fans and has worked toward making "The Hobbit" since 1995.

Jackson underwent surgery last month for a perforated stomach ulcer and said Friday he was "under a medical form of house arrest" though he would be "be jumping back into it very soon."

Filming is set to begin March 21. Other cast members, including Elijah Wood and Ian McKellen are set to join the production in coming weeks.

New Zealand actor William Kircher, who plays Bifur, a dwarf, dismissed concerns that an actors equity threat to boycott the production over pay levels for local actors had nearly seen the movies' location shifted to Europe.

Irish actor James Nesbitt, cast as the dwarf Bofur, said the union row had not affected the project.

"The Hobbit" is a prequel to "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy by Tolkien that Jackson helmed to blockbuster film success in 2001-03, winning best-picture and best-director Oscars for the finale.

Jackson in the process established his home country of New Zealand as the nearest thing to a real-world version Middle Earth

"It's 2011 and we're here to do the work," he said. "We

Smith. She said it's amazing what designers can do with half a yard of fabric.

Some of her favorite photos include Petra Nemkova in a suit made of cactus plant and Heidi Klum with a 14-foot boa constrictor wrapped around her body.

Smith said the editors start with thousands of suits stuffed on racks scattered everywhere. They'll take 300 or 400 on a trip with a theme in mind. They go on four or five trips every year. About 90 photos show up in the issue.

"I think a lot of the designers that are in it for so many years understand what we need. The more suits we have, the better chance you have of being in the issue," Smith said. "A good suit and a good fit can make the picture. These girls are running around the beach. You can't fake it. You have to make sure the suit fits."

Tiny and sexy are key when choosing potential styles, Smith said, but that's only half the story.

Jennifer Hudson still trying to make her mom proud

CHICAGO (AP)—In a tearful interview, singer and actress Jennifer Hudson said she's still trying to make her mother proud, and that's what has kept her going since her mother and two other family members were murdered.

Hudson, who has repeatedly declined to talk publicly about the killings, didn't directly address the details of the October 2008 slayings in Chicago of her mother, brother and 7-year-old nephew. But in an interview on

"The Oprah Winfrey Show"

that was broadcast Thursday, she discussed the source of the drive that quickly got her back on stage and in the recording studio just months after the tragedy.

"I try to do everything to say, 'OK, will my mother like this? Will she be pleased? Will she be proud of that? How do I know she's happy and she's smiling down at me from heaven?'" Hudson said. "And that's what I try to go by and walk by."

Shedding tears, Hudson said she could hear the voices of her brother and mother telling her to "knock it off," stop crying and keep going.

In October 2008, the bodies of her mother, Darnell Hudson Donerson, and brother, Jason Hudson, were found in the family's Chicago home.

The body of her 7-year-old nephew, Julian King, was



Hudson

found days later in a sport utility vehicle about 10 miles away. All three had been shot.

The estranged husband of Jennifer Hudson's sister, Julia, is charged with first-degree murder in the killings.

Hudson, 29, said she doesn't know if she's started to heal yet.

"It's such a shocking thing," she said. "It's a lot to take in. It's like, 'OK, is this real? Did this really happen?' It's hard to put it in sync with reality."

Her son, born in August 2009, is a source of strength, she said, and "the cutest little baby in the whole wide world."

Hudson performed her new single, "Where You At," and talked about how she

lost 80 pounds by resolving to get in shape after childbirth.

Three of Hudson's cousins—a bus driver, a teacher and a medical administrator—joined her on the show to talk about their own weight loss and model clothes chosen for them by "Project Runway" host Tim Gunn.

Hudson, a spokeswoman for Weight Watchers, credited the program and her determination for her weight loss. Winfrey announced that audience members at the show each would get three free one-year memberships to Weight Watchers so they could sign up with two friends.

'The Hobbit' closer to filming after long delays

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—The cast members of "The Hobbit" on Friday declared themselves ready for the cameras to roll on the next edition of mythical adventures from Middle Earth, after months of production trouble.

Hollywood studio funding problems, a threatened actors' boycott and ulcer surgery for director Peter Jackson have plagued pre-production on the \$500 million, two-movie project.

Some cast members spoke to reporters Friday on location in New Zealand and said they were putting the troubled history behind them.

"We're all optimistic, ready to go," said English actor Martin Freeman, who will play Bilbo Baggins.

Freeman and 13 actors who

play dwarf characters said they enjoyed the first month of preproduction, in which they trained in the gym, rode horses and practiced dialect to prepare for scenes depicting long journeys and dramatic battles between good and evil.

The twin movies of J.R.R. Tolkien's fantasy novel about a short, hairy-footed hero are expected to take up to two years to make, with the first timed for release in late 2012.

"The Hobbit" is a prequel to "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy by Tolkien that Jackson helmed to blockbuster film success in 2001-03, winning best-picture and best-director Oscars for the finale.

Jackson in the process established his home country of New Zealand as the nearest thing to a real-world version Middle Earth

"It's 2011 and we're here to do the work," he said. "We

don't even think about it. It's last year's news."

Last October, New Zealand changed labor laws and tipped in extra tax breaks for Hollywood studios MGM and New Line Cinema to ensure the Hobbit films would be made in the country.

The changes mean actors and others working on the films will be hired as contractors not employees. The union had wanted local actors and other production workers to be hired as full-fledged employees on union contracts.

New Zealand received a huge boost to its tourism and film-making industries from "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy.

Irish actor James Nesbitt, cast as the dwarf Bofur, said the union row had not affected the project.

Judge OKs Charlie Sheen, wife divorce

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Charlie Sheen can go back to being single, but he'll have to wait a few months before it's official, a judge ruled Thursday.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Hank Goldberg finalized Sheen's divorce from his ex-wife Brooke Mueller Sheen, but the pair will not be legally single until May 2.

The actor and Brooke Sheen filed dueling divorce petitions in November, citing Christmas Day 2009 as the day of their breakup. Charlie Sheen was arrested in Aspen, Colo., that day on suspicion of domestic violence against his wife. He later resolved the case and spent 30 days on probation.

The former couple will split the royalties from baby portraits of them and their twin sons, and the actor will keep his Hollywood Hills home, court records show. The Sheens signed a prenuptial agreement before their May 2008 wedding, which called for Charlie Sheen to pay Brooke Sheen more than \$750,000.

The pair will share legal custody of their sons, although



AP
In this Sept. 20, 2009, file photo, actor Charlie Sheen, right, and his wife Brooke Mueller arrive at the 61st Primetime Emmy Awards in Los Angeles.

physical custody is granted to Brooke Sheen with substantial visitation time allotted for the actor. He is required to pay

\$55,000 a month in child support, according to the agreement filed with the court.

The judgment was first reported by celebrity website TMZ.

The divorce judgment comes after several tumultuous months for Charlie Sheen, whose show "Two and a Half Men" remains on hold while he receives treatment for unspecified conditions.

He has been briefly hospitalized three times in recent months, the first of which came after he was taken by police from a room at a luxury New York hotel that was left in shambles.

Charlie Sheen was hospitalized last month after his neighbor, a Beverly Hills plastic surgeon, called 911 to report the actor was intoxicated and in severe pain.

The actor has thanked fans and his employers for their support and has said through his spokesman that he hopes to resume taping "Men" later this month. The show is television's highest-rated comedy, and bosses at CBS and Warner Bros. Television have expressed concern for the actor's well-being.

...and Kelsey Grammer's too

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A judge granted Kelsey Grammer a divorce Thursday, clearing the way for the actor to remarry later this month.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Maren Nelson signed off on Kelsey and Camille Grammer's split, and the pair will settle financial issues at a later date.

"I have a great many mixed feelings about today—I'm sad for what was, yet excited for the road ahead," Camille Grammer said in a statement.

She thanked family and friends who had been supportive throughout the couple's divorce, which was filed in July. The couple were married nearly 13 years.

"What I hope is that Kelsey and I can improve our communications and truly co-

parent our two wonderful children," her statement said.

She also wished her ex and his fiancee, Kayte Walsh, "love and happiness in their new marriage."

Kelsey Grammer, 55, told David Letterman on his show last month that he plans to marry Walsh sometime in February. The veteran actor starred in the comedy series "Cheers" and "Frasier."

Camille Grammer, 42, appeared on the recent season of "The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills."

She has estimated in court filings that the former couple's shared property may be worth \$20 million.

Attorneys for the former couple told Nelson they will set aside \$2.3 million while financial arrangements are handled.



AP
In this June 13, 2010 file photo, Kelsey Grammer and his wife Camille Grammer arrive at the 61st Annual Tony Awards in New York.

Kid Rock defends decision to perform in snowy Ark.

DETROIT (AP)—Kid Rock has posted an expletive-laden message on his website, defending his decision to perform as scheduled Wednesday night in snowy Arkansas.

Some fans who were unwilling or unable to brave ice- and snow-covered roads to get to Verizon Arena in North Little Rock, Ark., had voiced their displeasure on Rock's website.

The Detroit musician told fans that if they purchased tickets to the show and couldn't make it, "YOU WILL BE GETTING A REFUND, STRAIGHT OUT OF MY POCKET."

Rock said he's "never ripped any of my fans off" and never missed a show.

He also responded with profanity to people who he said accused him of being "greedy" for deciding to go forward with the performance. Rock said many fans drove in poor weather to make the show, as did he and his band.

"It's not easy to tour in these conditions and also be stuck on the road with a teenage son at home and in high school," he wrote. "I make a lot of money, no question, but I've never ripped anyone off to do it."

The concert went ahead after a winter storm dropped 2 feet of snow on parts of Arkansas and Oklahoma and three people

died in two crashes on an interstate.

Verizon Arena had announced earlier Wednesday that the concert would go on as a scheduled. The arena's general manager, Michael Marion, did not immediately respond to messages left seeking comment Thursday.

Stacy Smith, 36, of Booneville, Ark., and three companions had tickets to the show, but thought better of making the drive, which would have taken them two hours on a normal day.

"We heard they were closing some roads between here and there and were afraid that we might get halfway there and not be able to go on," she said. "We were also afraid of not being able to get back home again, and we have kids that depend on us to get home safely."

Smith posted her disappointment in missing the show in a message on the social networking site Facebook but said she doesn't blame Rock for going ahead with it.

"I think Kid Rock did the right thing by going on with the show," said Smith, a rural carrier with the U.S. Postal Service. "His fans paid for him to show up and perform, and that's what he did. . . . I just hope that all of the negative comments doesn't keep him from coming back to Little Rock."

Underwood: husband's trade 'exciting opportunity'

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—So long, long distance. Newlyweds Carrie Underwood and NHL player Mike Fisher soon will be living together full time in Nashville.

The Ottawa Senators traded Fisher to the Nashville Predators for two draft picks. Underwood tells The Associated Press in a statement that they will both miss Ottawa.

She says Fisher has been a big part of the community, and she'll never forget how they welcomed her with open arms.

The two have been splitting time between the two cities since they were married last July. Nashville is Underwood's adopted hometown since winning "American Idol" in 2005 and launching her country music career.

She says they consider the trade an exciting opportunity for Fisher and that she supports him wherever he plays.

Fisher could play for the Preds Saturday.

Maturing teenager is fearful, ashamed of body's changes

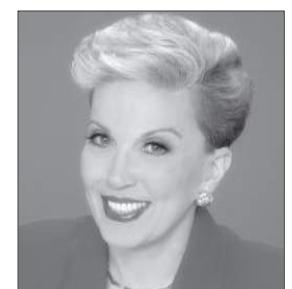
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I am a 17-year-old girl who is obsessed with remaining a virgin. I'm uncomfortable around guys my age for fear they will want sex.

I am tormented all day long by thoughts of losing my virginity. If I see a mildly racy scene in a movie or have a sexual thought and experience some sort of physiological reaction, I become extremely upset. I must repeatedly reassure myself that any arousal was not deliberate.

I'm sick of feeling so anxious over this stuff. I sometimes wish I didn't know about sex at all. What can I do?

EMBARRASSED IN NEW YORK



Dear Abby

DEAR EMBARRASSED: Stop beating yourself up for having normal feelings for someone your age. As young women (and men) mature, sexual feelings happen. They are not shameful, and experiencing them does not mean they must be acted upon.

The more you tell yourself NOT to think about something, the more you will. (I feel similarly about chocolate.) One way to deal with obsessive thoughts is to divert the thought into an action that IS acceptable. In your case, becoming involved in sports might rechannel some of your sexual energy. The key is to stay busy. But if your obsessive thoughts persist, they should be discussed with a licensed mental health professional.

■ ■ ■
DEAR ABBY: My daughter-in-law is driving us crazy. She is constantly on her cell phone with Facebook, e-mail or playing games when she's at our home. Her sons (3 and 7) were fighting last week and she didn't even raise her head to break it up. She just repeated in a monotone, "Stop," because she didn't want to break her concentration!

What I don't understand is, she's a teacher. How would she feel if her whole class tweeted, e-mailed and played games during her lessons? If I say anything about her using the phone at our dinner table, she makes a face and later tells my son I'm rude.

HAD THE INTERNET UP TO HERE!

DEAR HAD THE INTERNET!: The Internet has many virtues. It provides information and diversion—but it can also be addictive. From your description of your daughter-in-law, it appears she has become hooked. That she would fail to intervene when her children misbehave sends a strong message.

You should detail your concerns to your son because they are valid. Not only is your daughter-in-law's behavior rude and a poor example, but the children are being neglected. The Internet is not the problem. The problem is her fixation on it.

■ ■ ■
DEAR ABBY: After entertaining family and friends with BBQ holiday dinners, which includes purchasing all the food and beverages, must I send guests home with leftovers? Over the years, it has been "expected" that I'd give them a take-home dinner at my expense. What's right—pack the leftovers for my own personal use or divide them up for guests?

LEFT HOLDING THE BAG

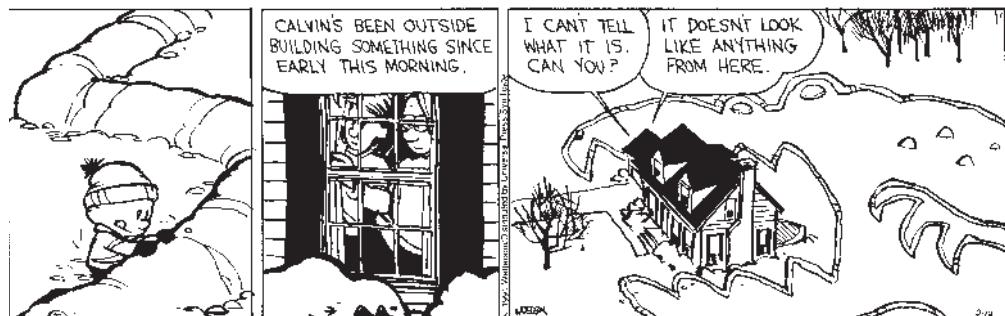
DEAR LEFT HOLDING THE BAG: People "expect" you to send the leftovers with them because that's the pattern you set all these years. Because you now prefer to keep them for your personal use, pare down the menu and prepare less food. You might also clean up earlier and put the excess food away—out of sight, out of mind. If you are questioned, deal with it by pointing out that in this economy everyone needs to cut back—and while in the past you sent food home with your guests, for the foreseeable future "charity" begins at home. YOUR home.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$12 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



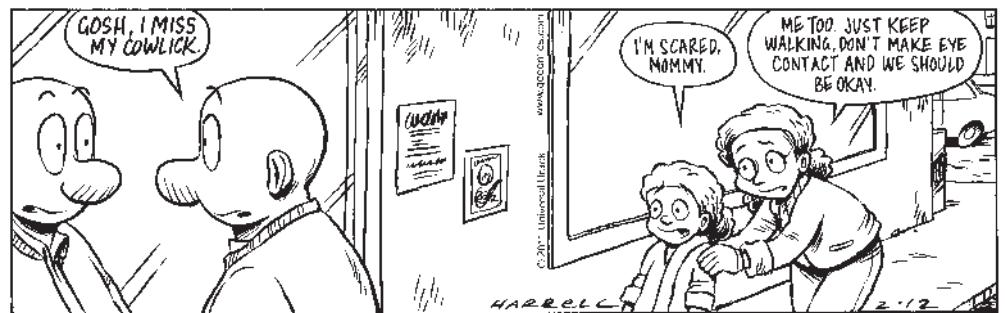
By Bill Waterson

Garfield®



By Jim Davis

Adam@home



By Bryan Basset

The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy

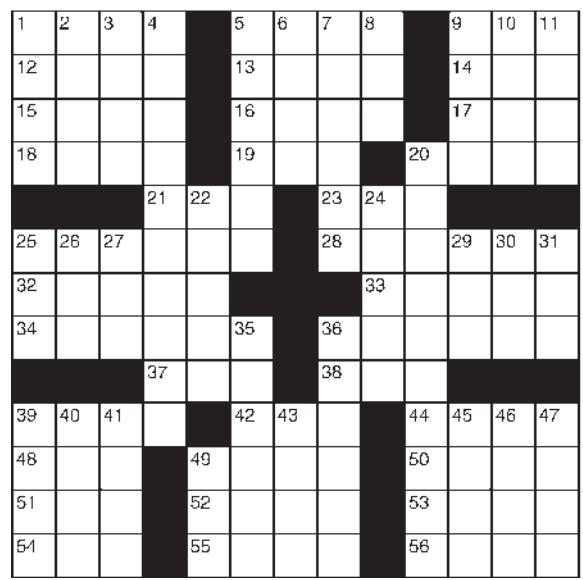
CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	32	Martini additive	52	Yin counterpart	10	Hodge-podge
1 Close up tight	33	Quotable Yankee	53	Cavort	11	Actress Rossum
5 Gravy vessel	34	Makes broader	54	Nugent of rock	20	Shortcuts
9 Fawn's mama	36	Vacation site	55	Otherwise	22	Representative
12 Creche trio	37	Hwy.	56	Bridge	24	Normand of silents
13 Actress Jessica	38	— carte	DOWN	1	Blue material?	25 Scatter
14 Shade source	39	Responsibility	2	Uncomplicated	26 "The Greatest"	27 YouTube offering, for short
15 Colorado Springs org.	42	Gun the engine	3	Culture medium	29 Expert	30 Screw up
16 Titanic destroyer	44	Crooner Jerry	4	Toroidal candies	31 Scoundrel	32
17 Intention	48	Clear the tables	5	Talk on and on	33 Last writes?	34
18 Phoenician port	49	Old Italian money	6	Margarine	40 Micro-wave, slangily	41 Second-hand
19 Hallowe'en shout	50	Greek vowels	7	Overseas	43 Sea eagles	44 On
20 Avoir-dupois alternative	51	White House nickname	8	Playground game	45 Dalai —	46 Dalai —
21 Bando of baseball lore	52	House	9	Cherished	47 Game fans' channel	48 Caustic solution
23 Parisian pal	53	nickname	Solution time: 27 mins.			
25 Adam of "Myth-Busters"	54					
28 Deading device	55					



Yesterday's answer 2-12



For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5951. 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

STUMPED?

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Mike Posner, 23; Christina Ricci, 31; Darren Aronofsky, 42; Josh Brolin, 43

Happy Birthday: Follow through with your plans, even if someone is trying to derail your every move. Stick to the schedule you have and you will accomplish your goals. Don't let your personal life come between you and your productivity. Put your strategy for the year in place and get moving. Your numbers are 4, 9, 13, 21, 26, 32, 49

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You'll feel pressured by what everyone around you is doing. Don't put yourself in a compromising position that will lead to a commitment you don't want to make. How you play the game will determine how well you do. ★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You'll be taken advantage of if you fall for a sob story or are coerced into helping someone who should be helping you. Nothing will come easy or free, so separate your emotions from whatever you face so you can act with sound judgment. ★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): There is nothing to stop you unless you let other people's responsibilities consume you. Let others carry their weight. Being in the right place at the right time will lead to your success. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Travel or networking can help you see the world through different eyes, encouraging you to be a participant instead of an onlooker. Love is in the stars and adventure will promote interesting times ahead. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You've got everything to gain by taking action and speaking your mind. A partnership will bring about possibilities that were not an option in the past. Contracts can be drawn up and signed and plans put into place. ★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Stop worrying so much about work and money. Learn how to enjoy yourself more. Make plans with friends or get involved in a group, organization or networking event that will give you a new perspective on how to view life. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't let anyone make you feel guilty or inadequate. Keep the peace and take care of your responsibilities but don't miss out on something you truly want to do. Trust and believe in yourself and your ability. ★★★★★

TAURUS (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You'll be in a quandary about a decision being made that really isn't up to you to question. Try to voice your disapproval reasonably or you will not reach a workable agreement that can potentially affect your life for years to come. Patience will be required. ★★★

SCORPIO (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You are heading in a direction that is looking pretty favorable. Position yourself for advancement or making a move from one location to another. Everyone will want a piece of your action. Being cordial now will pay off later. ★★★

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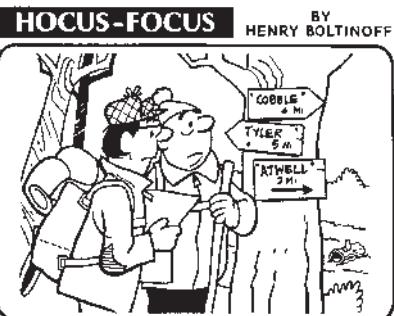
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Find at least six differences in details between panels.



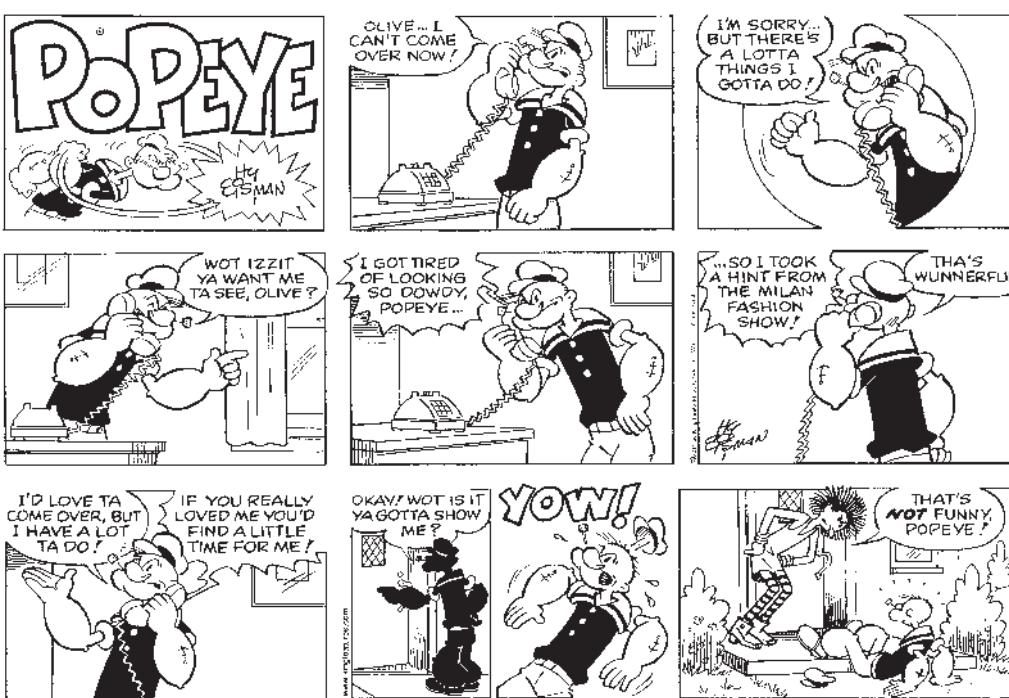
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Wishing Well®

2	5	6	2	7	3	6	3	5	3	4	2	3
S	L	I	U	N	E	M	M	E	O	S	C	T
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L	O	A	L	F	S	O	F	R	L	N	K	S

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

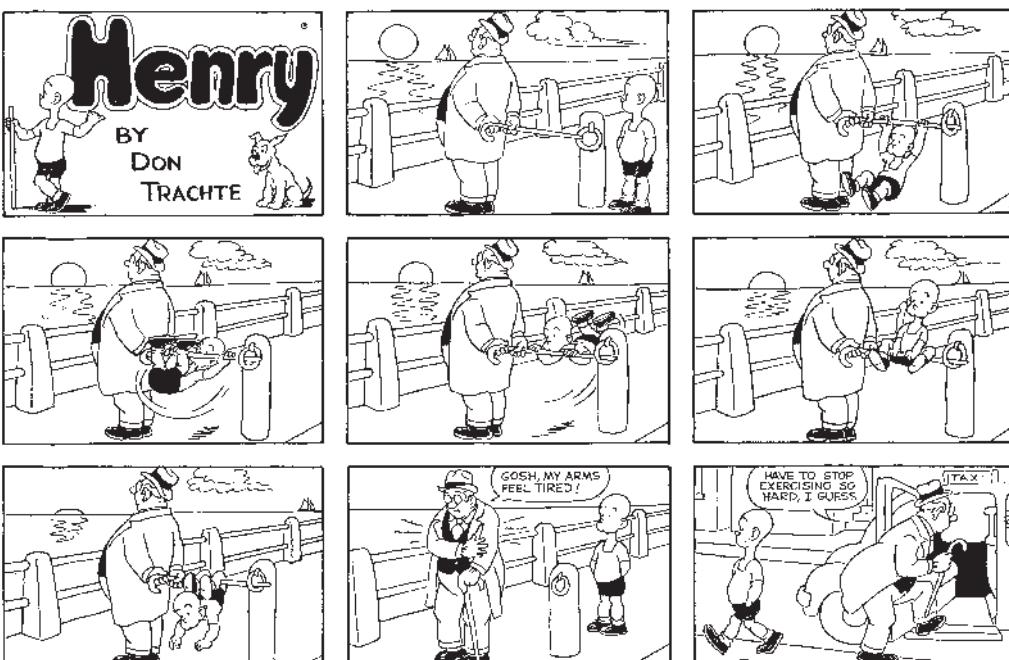
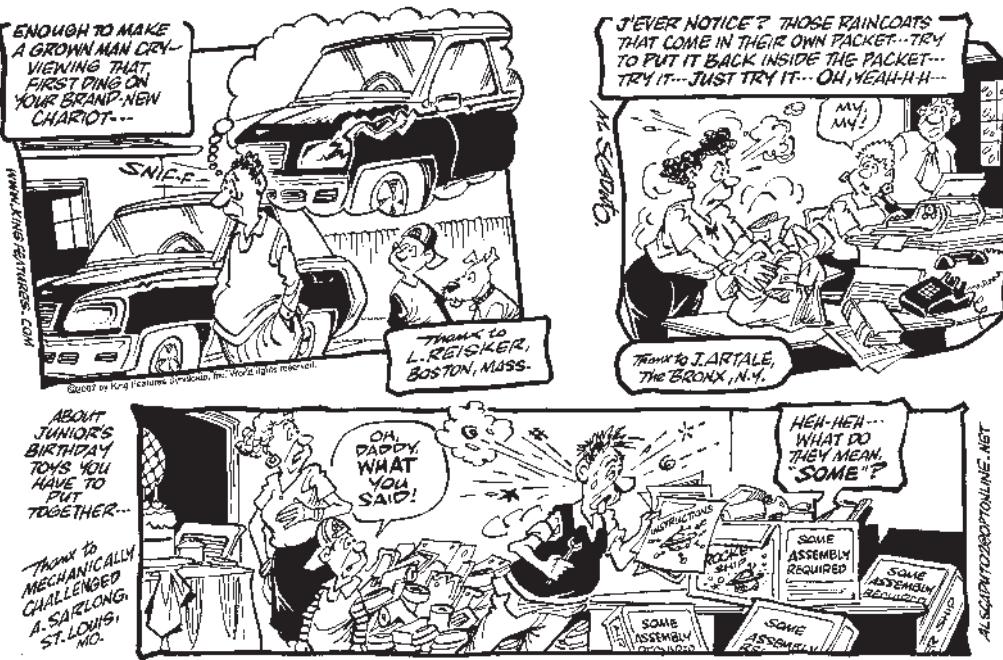
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by Al Scaduto



They'll Do It Every Time



Super Crossword AROMANCE

ACROSS

- 1 Tower town
- 5 Ditch
- 9 Married Mile.
- 12 "Life" (66 hit)
- 17 Acted like grandma
- 19 Tam material
- 20 Sit in on a class
- 21 Actor Alex
- 22 "Aida" river
- 23 "Meter" leader
- 24 Actress Rivera
- 25 Throb
- 26 Loser to DDE
- 27 Author Christie
- 29 Stirrup site
- 30 Riddle: Part 1
- 36 Gridiron position
- 37 Z — zebra
- 38 Present for pop
- 39 Dutch export
- 42 Ms. Silkwood
- 44 Wine variety
- 50 Sought office
- 51 Famed caravan
- 52 Om, for instance
- 53 Actress Joanne
- 54 ABA member
- 55 Skater Hughes
- 56 Come out of one's shell
- 57 Dutch export
- 58 Sharif role
- 60 22 Across feature
- 61 Internet acronym
- 63 Riddle: Part 2
- 68 Permit
- 69 Grows light
- 70 Studio
- 73 Word with camp or tree
- 76 "— Rolling Stone" ('65 hit)
- 77 Groundwork
- 79 Before, to Byron
- 80 Mackie or Marley
- 81 Wobble
- 83 Add a lane
- 84 It may be white
- 85 Titmouse
- 87 Emulate Elle
- 90 "— vous plait"
- 91 Joyce's land
- 92 Implore site?
- 93 Answer to riddle
- 104 "Exodus" protagonist
- 105 Plaza Hotel kid
- 106 Get a galley going
- 107 Marineland performer
- 111 Construct
- 112 Crow's toe
- 114 TV's "Mad — You"
- 115 Celebrity
- 116 Mispickel and galena
- 117 Costa —
- 118 Rampal's instrument
- 119 — apso
- 120 Draft agcy.
- 121 Dentist's directive
- 122 French bean?
- 123 Rama
- 124 Revolver?
- 125 Lost
- 126 "The Addams Family" actor
- 127 Austrian city
- 128 Mary of "Dodsworth"
- 129 Claire or Balin
- 130 Big
- 131 "The Addams Family" actor
- 132 "The Addams Family" actor
- 133 "The Addams Family" actor
- 134 "The Addams Family" actor
- 135 Barbie's boyfriend
- 136 Solemn statement
- 137 "Wait — Dark" ('67 film)
- 138 Ballet company
- 139 Santa —, CA
- 140 Smith or Page
- 141 Like Machu Picchu
- 142 "Diamond —"
- 143 "Rolling Stone" ('65 hit)
- 144 "Before, to" Byron
- 145 "Mackie or Marley"
- 146 "Doggie"
- 147 "Restless"
- 148 "Left the Union"
- 149 "Fuss and feathers"
- 150 "Emulate Elle"
- 151 "— setter"
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REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

By JAYVEE VALLEJERA
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Weather Channel predicted near-freezing weather for Jan. 5, the day the 112th Congress was to be sworn in. What D.C. got was a blindingly sunny day, with hardly a cloud to mar the cobalt blue sky.

In fact, it was chillier inside the Capitol, when outgoing House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) was preparing to hand over the gavel to the new speaker, John Boehner (R-Ohio). When Pelosi began enumerating the accomplishments of the 111th Congress under her leadership, the frosty silence emanating from the Republican side of the House was enough to cause icicles some 19 times b on both sides of the aisle about f times: when she thanked her leagues for making her the first woman speaker (the fourth appla when she acknowledged Boe family, when she said that B has earned everyone's respe when she officially handed

Pelosi's farewell speech was punctuated by applause some 19 times b the clapping was only unanimous on both sides of the aisle about f times: when she thanked her leagues for making her the first woman speaker (the fourth appla when she acknowledged Boe family, when she said that B has earned everyone's respe when she officially handed

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Sablan, other delegates come out swinging as 112th Congress starts

Volume XXI, Issue No. 5

OPINION METER
This week's poll:
Are you in favor of Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's plan to redefine public service and "reduce" government?

Let your voice be heard!
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INSIDE

Capsized Boat
Days after it capsized before Tarapag Pavilion, a yacht of Mariana Resort & Spa was finally pulled ashore.

Local...Page 8

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Photo by Jayvee Vallejera

Kobe rallies Lakers past Allen, Celtics



BOSTON (AP)—Kobe Bryant scored 20 of his 23 points in the second half, and the Los Angeles Lakers spoiled Ray Allen's record-setting night by beating the Boston Celtics 92-86 in an NBA finals rematch on Thursday night.

Allen became the NBA's career leader in 3-pointers in the first quarter, but Bryant later put him on the bench in foul trouble during his big second half that rallied Los Angeles from an early 15-point deficit.

Pau Gasol added 20 points and 10 rebounds for the Lakers, who split the regular season series with their biggest rivals and got a sorely needed victory against one of the league's top teams. Andrew Bynum, the subject of trade rumors in the never-ending Carmelo Anthony saga, finished with 16 points and nine rebounds.

Allen hit two 3-pointers in the first quarter to pass former Indiana Pacers star Reggie Miller (2,560), who was sitting courtside calling the game for TNT. But he made only one more and had 20 points after scoring 12 in the first quarter.

Paul Pierce had 15 points for the Celtics, who came in shooting an NBA-best 49.7 percent and shredded the Lakers for 60 percent shooting in their 109-96 victory at Los Angeles on Jan. 30, but went cold after a strong start in this one and finished at 40 percent.

Bryant scored 41 points in that loss, but seemed headed nowhere near it after taking only three shots in the first half. He had a quick flurry out of halftime, then had eight points in the final 4:51 to help the Lakers hold on.

Lamar Odom finished with 10 points, 12 rebounds and one headache for the Lakers, who moved to 3-0 on their seven-game Grammys road trip that continues Friday in New York.

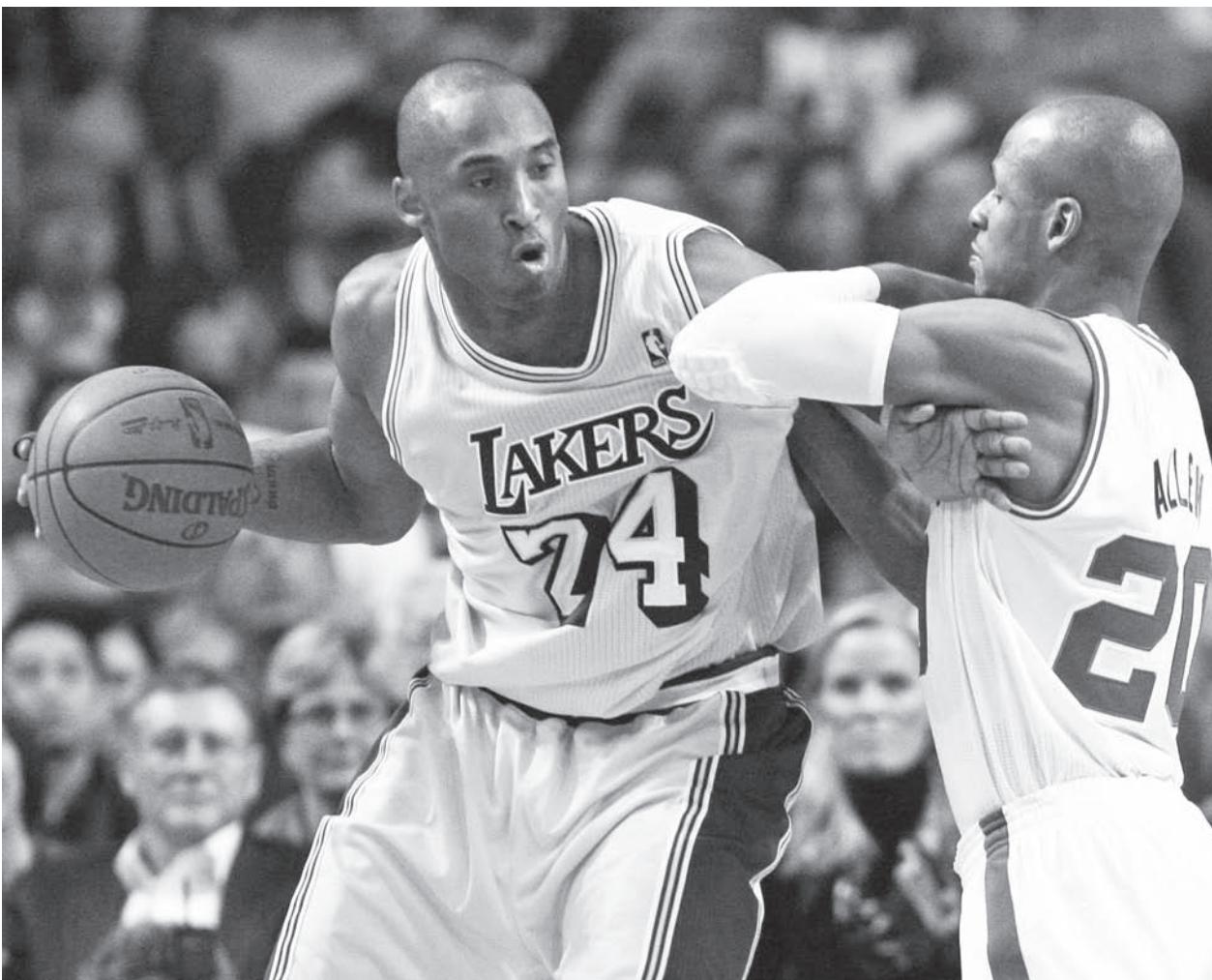
Down eight at halftime, Los Angeles return from the locker room with a 10-0 burst, and it was back and forth the remainder of the third quarter. The Lakers scored six consecutive points late in the period, the last two in painful fashion after Odom tipped in Gasol's miss, then their heads collided as they turned to run downcourt. Los Angeles led 72-68 after three.

Sporting a large bandage on his forehead, Odom opened the fourth with a 3-pointer, but the Celtics were only down three midway through the period before Bryant made two jumpers and a layup to push the lead to 88-79 with 3:12 remaining. Boston got back within five, but Bryant found Gasol for a bucket underneath, then finished with off with a jumper with 48 seconds to play.

It gets no easier for the Celtics, who host Miami on Sunday in a showdown of Eastern Conference powers.

Allen tied the record with his first 3-pointer with 4:14 left in the first quarter, but missed on the next possession with the crowd ready to roar. He nailed the record breaker with 1:48 to go, taking a pass from Rajon Rondo as he trailed on a delayed break and pulling up from the right wing for a 22-14 lead.

Allen had 12 points in the period,



in the half and were down only 53-45 at halftime.

Nuggets 121, Mavericks 120

In Denver, Arron Afflalo sank a 19-footer at the buzzer as Denver ended Dallas' 10-game winning streak in dramatic style.

Denver's Nene hit 1 of 2 free throws with 33.3 seconds left to tie it, but Dirk Nowitzki hit one free throw with 19.6 seconds left to give Dallas a one-point lead.

Denver chose not to call a timeout, and Chauncey Billups found Afflalo, who got a shot off before the horn that went in to the roar of home fans. Afflalo finished with 24 points.

Carmelo Anthony scored 42 points for Denver, which overcame a nine-point deficit in the last 2:51 to win.

Jason Terry scored 25 points for the Mavericks.

Suns 112, Warriors 88

In Phoenix, three days after his 37th birthday, Steve Nash had 18 points and 11 assists, then sat out the fourth quarter as Phoenix went on to the easy win over Golden State.

Channing Frye added 17 points and nine rebounds for the Suns, who beat the Warriors for the second time in four nights to climb to .500 (25-25) for the first time since Dec. 19.

Ekpe Udoh and Brandan Wright scored 16 apiece for the Warriors.

The Suns made it a blowout with a 20-0 run—the last 14 points of the first half and first six of the second—to go up 71-42.

Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant (24) works against Boston Celtics guard Ray Allen (20) in the second half of an NBA basketball game in Boston on Thursday, Feb. 10, 2011.

then was honored during the break with a loud, standing ovation. He hugged Miller, then his mother before going into the crowd to see his family. A video

montage in the second quarter showed highlights from his earlier years in Milwaukee and Seattle.

It seemed there'd be plenty of time

for celebrating his big night when the Celtics rolled to a 15-point lead on Allen's dunk with 5:28 left in the half. But the Lakers ran off 10 in a row later

Sloan steps down as Jazz coach

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—After 23 seasons, Hall of Fame coach Jerry Sloan had only one bit of advice for successor Ty Corbin.

"Be yourself," Sloan said Thursday after announcing he was stepping down after 1,127 wins the Jazz because he didn't have the energy any more.

Corbin, a former Jazz player, already began meeting with players and will coach his first game Friday night against the Phoenix Suns.

Around the league, the shock remained.

"I'm too shocked to have a reaction," Boston Celtics coach Doc Rivers said. "It caught us all off guard. ... He's been there like this rock and all of a sudden the rock is gone. It's like your franchise moved or something. I don't know. It's just strange."

Miami Heat star LeBron James had a similar reaction.

"Man it's gonna be crazy and weird seeing anyone besides Jerry Sloan walking the sidelines for the Utah Jazz!" James tweeted. "Jerry Sloan is the Utah Jazz. Wow."

Sloan was the longest tenured coach in any of the four major sports. His resignation came just two weeks after the second-longest tenured professional coach, Jeff Fisher, parted ways with the Tennessee Titans after a 6-10 season.

"I had a feeling this time was the time to move on," an emotional Sloan said during a Thursday afternoon news conference. "(That's) a long time to be

in one organization. Again, I've been blessed. Today is a new day. When I get this over with, I'll feel better. My time is up and it's time to move on."

Longtime assistant Phil Johnson also resigned, surprising even Sloan during their postgame chat Wednesday night with general manager Kevin O'Connor.

"I came with him and I'll leave with him," the 69-year-old Johnson said Thursday.

The two men agreed to sleep on their decisions Wednesday night at the request of team owners and O'Connor, who said he "begged" Sloan not to resign.

Nothing changed in the morning and Sloan reported sleeping better than he has in six weeks. Asked what he'll do now, he didn't know, and said he expected to be a "dizzy duck" for a while.

Jazz CEO Greg Miller also said he tried to talk Sloan out of retiring.

"I want to make it clear that nobody pushed Jerry or Phil out," Miller said. "I loved and respected Jerry for as long as I can remember... I will miss him but benefit from the things he taught me for the rest of my life."

Team officials made it clear that Corbin is not an interim coach.

O'Connor also called false reports that star guard Deron Williams told the team to choose between him or Sloan.

"That's not fair to Deron," O'Connor said. "That puts him in such a bad light. Whoever started that rumor is ei-

ther uninformed or a liar. I would say the latter."

Williams told 1320-KFAN radio that he and Sloan clashed at halftime Wednesday but insisted there is no truth to the rumors that he forced the Hall of Fame coach out.

"We had a disagreement," Williams told the station. "I've seen him have worse ones with other players. Jerry's very fiery. I am, too. Sometimes we clash on things."

"I would never force coach Sloan out of Utah. He's meant more to this town, more to this organization than I have by far. I would have asked out of Utah first."

Williams said he and Sloan are both "stubborn" and clashed because they both wanted to win.

"Not many come into this league and can play for a Hall of Fame coach their first six years," Williams told the station. "I got a chance to learn from the best. We won a lot of basketball games because of coach Sloan."

Now it's up to 48-year-old Corbin to win some more, starting Friday at home against the Phoenix Suns.

Jazz broadcaster Thurl Bailey, who was traded to Minnesota from Utah in 1991 in exchange for Corbin, called Thursday a "sad day" for the state because such a legend stepped down. But he also was pleased for Corbin, the team's first black coach.

"That's significant," Bailey said. "It goes to a great guy, who was a great player, who happens to be African-

American. But as we all know, this is a great country we live in. It's what he worked for. Some guys want to be president. Some guys want to be head coach of an NBA team."

Corbin was offered the job very quickly Thursday morning, and called it a "bittersweet" moment. Sloan said he had not talked to any players, but Corbin was able to sit down with Williams before the press conference.

"While it's a great opportunity for me, it's a bitter moment for me because I will miss these guys a lot," said Corbin, in his seventh year as a Jazz assistant and a former Jazz small forward.

The moves came on the heels of an emotional 91-86 loss Wednesday night to the Chicago Bulls, Utah's 10th in 14 games.

But Sloan, the longest-tenured coach in the four major professional sports, insisted that wasn't the final straw.

But he hinted after the game that something was in the works after delaying his postgame news conference more than 30 minutes.

"I'll be 69 years old next month," Sloan said. "I'm not as lively as I used to be. There's no question losses are very difficult to handle the older you get. When I was younger, I thought I could handle anything, but they were a little more difficult when you get older."

Sloan just recently signed a one-year contract extension to carry him through the 2011-12 season, but he also indicated that he would not make anything official until after the current season.

Marino, Points atop the leaderboard at Pebble



**P E B B L E
B E A C H , C a l i f .** (AP)—D.A.

Points knew it was going to be a great week at the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am when he found out Bill Murray was his amateur partner.

It got even better on Thursday.

Points found Murray's antics to be more amusing than annoying, and it showed in his play. With eight birdies on the Shore Course at Monterey Peninsula, he opened with a 7-under 63 and shared the lead with Steve Marino.

Some might think he shot a 63 despite having Murray in his ear all day. Points says he shot 63 because of him.

"I know people talk about his antics, or he's a showman while he's out there, making lots of comments and talking while people are getting ready to hit shots," Points said. "To be honest, it really loosens me up and makes me between shots not be grinding so hard on what I'm doing. It helps me take a little bit of a breather between shots and joke around with him."

There was plenty to enjoy for most everyone on a glorious day on the peninsula, with only a mild breeze to accompany views that were as spectacular as ever. Beyond the weather, the conditions on three courses were as good as they have ever been. The fairways were particularly firm on the Shore Course, and the greens were fast everywhere.

The rounds took six hours, as usual, but some of that was because of the speed of the greens.

Marino had a most unusual 7-under 65 at Spyglass Hill in that he failed to birdie any of the par 5s. He still managed seven birdies, including a big drive and a wedge to inside a foot on his final hole. The green is elevated, and Marino only knew it was good when a woman began shrieking after it checked up close to the pin.

"I think your mother likes it," Mark Long, the caddie for amateur Dermot Desmond, called back to Marino.

Even more pleasing to Marino was the 9-iron he hit on the previous hole, the par-4 eighth, that took one hop and hit the pin before settling about 8 feet away. A year ago on Spyglass, he holed out with an 8-iron.



AP

D.A. Points, right, is greeted by actor Bill Murray, left, after chipping the ball in for a birdie on the 16th green of the Monterey Peninsula Country Club during the first round of the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am golf tournament in Pebble Beach, Calif., Thursday, Feb. 10, 2011.

The best shot of the day belonged to Alex Cejka, who was one shot behind after a 64 on the Shore Course. He

"I think it was the best start I've ever had," Cejka said in somewhat of an understatement.

It was a chilly start to the day, and he figured he would need a little extra club from 240 yards away, so he choked down on a 3-wood.

"It carried just short of the green and bounced up and took a break toward

the hole," Cejka said. "There were like three or four marshals up there and they started screaming, and suddenly it was in the hole. It's the first one for me."

The group at 5 under included Gary Woodland, whose 67 was the best score at Pebble Beach.

Most of the screaming took place on the Shore Course, its second year in the



W A S H I N G T O N
(AP)—Negotiations to prevent an NFL lockout took a grim turn Thurs-

day with the cancellation of the second day of a planned two-day bargaining session.

"We wish we were negotiating today," NFL Players Association spokesman George Atallah said. "That's all I can say."

There are just three weeks to go before the collective bargaining agreement expires on March 3.

The NFL confirmed that Commissioner Roger Goodell has canceled an owners' meeting scheduled for next Tuesday in Philadelphia, where labor was expected to be a topic.

"Despite the inaccurate characterizations of (Wednesday's) meeting, out of respect to the collective bargaining process and our negotiating partner, we are going to continue to conduct negotiations with the union in private," league spokesman Greg Aiello told

NFL, players' union cancel 2nd day of talks in DC

The Associated Press via e-mail, "and not engage in a point-counterpoint on the specifics of either side's proposals or the meeting process. Instead, we will work as hard as possible to reach a fair agreement by March 4. We are fully focused on that goal."

The collapse of the talks came as a surprise. The two sides got together Wednesday for the second time in five days, the previous negotiations taking place in Dallas on Saturday before the Super Bowl. Neither Atallah nor NFLPA executive director DeMaurice Smith would comment on why Thursday's session was called off.

The union sent a memo Thursday to player agents updating the status of discussions on a rookie wage scale. A union proposal to decrease the maximum length of rookie contracts to four years for players selected in the first three rounds, and three years for players

chosen after that, also included a limit on financial incentives and salary escalators that could be included in rookie deals.

Those limits would, the NFLPA claims, provide the cost certainty the league is seeking for its rookie salary pool.

According to the memo seen by The Associated Press, the NFL's response was a five-year wage scale with base salary escalators. That would virtually eliminate individual negotiation of rookie contracts.

Owners opted out of the current CBA in 2008 and are seeking a bigger cut of the league's revenues, which are roughly \$9 billion, as well as the rookie wage scale. They also want to increase the regular season by two games to 18, while dropping two pre-season games.

The players are happy with the status quo.

The NFL has had labor peace since a 1987 players' strike that led to three games with replacement players, but some sort of labor stoppage appears a genuine possibility this year because of the slow pace of negotiations. The talks at the Super Bowl were the first formal discussions since November.

Meanwhile, the NFLPA continued to present its side of the argument to the public. The union was a guest of American Rights at Work, which brought in a beer vendor from Ford Field in Detroit as part of a news conference in the nation's capital aimed at demonstrating the effects a lockout would have on the economy.

"Football and other major sporting events are some of the only things that bring people to downtown Detroit after 5 p.m.," said John Marler, who has worked at the stadium since 2007.

Kimberly Freeman Brown, execu-

tion for the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am, and already one of the favorites. That's where the celebrity rotation began the tournament, and the crowd followed.

Phil Mickelson didn't provide too many highlights, opening with a 1-over 71. Dustin Johnson, trying to become the first player since this tournament began in 1937 to win three successive years, made bogeys on two par 5s and had to settle for a 71.

For Points, there were a few trying moments. On the par-3 14th, Murray and former San Francisco 49ers tackle Harris Barton both made long birdie putts. Then it was Points' turn.

"I got up over my putt and he started talking to me about he just made a putt, and how Harris just made a putt, and how easy this should be," Points said.

He three-putted for his only bogey.

"It didn't bother me at all," he said. "I just hit two bad putts."

Nothing could stress him out on his day—beautiful weather, a partner he always wanted. A year ago, Points was excited to be drawn with Mickelson and Rickie Fowler at Torrey Pines, and with Tiger Woods at Aronimink in the AT&T National.

This topped them all.

He grew up in Illinois, and Murray has long been one of his favorites. He thought about asking tournament officials if he could be paired with the actor, then decided against it. Imagine his surprise when someone sent a text to his wife Tuesday night that Murray would be his partner, and the phone call that followed the next morning.

"I've got this message on my phone," Points said. "He says, 'D.A., this is Bill Murray. ... I got your number from the Police Department.'"

Murray invited him to play that afternoon at Cypress Point, and Points said he played the final four holes—some of the most beautiful of any golf course around the world—as the sun was setting over the Pacific.

While telling the story, Points mentioned Thursday was his daughter's first birthday.

"This week so far just seems to keep getting better and better and better," he said. "I'm having a good time."

So is Murray. In the pro-am portion of the tournament, they opened with a 59.

tive director of American Rights at Work, said the NFL and union are fussing over many of the same issues faced by many workers: pay cuts, longer working hours, workplace safety and health care. She said a lockout would have an impact on 150,000 jobs and cause more than \$160 million in lost revenue in every city with an NFL team. She called a potential work stoppage "something that could potentially have devastating consequences on our quality of life and our mental health."

"For many fans, football is just that deep to us," Brown said.

Atallah defended the union's public relations tactics.

"It is important for us to stand with the people who are here on this panel, not for any publicity issue or publicity stunt," Atallah said. "This is real life for us. This is a reality that these people face."

Smith arrived during the news conference, but stayed in the back of the room and did not answer questions.

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Boston	38	14	.731	—
New York	26	25	.510	11 1/2
Philadelphia	24	28	.462	14
New Jersey	16	37	.302	22 1/2
Toronto	14	39	.264	24 1/2

Southeast Division

Miami	38	14	.731	—
Atlanta	33	19	.635	5
Orlando	34	20	.630	5
Charlotte	22	30	.423	16
Washington	14	37	.275	23 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	35	16	.686	—
Indiana	22	28	.440	12 1/2
Milwaukee	20	31	.392	15
Detroit	20	33	.377	16
Cleveland	8	45	.151	28

WESTERN CONFERENCE**Southwest Division**

San Antonio	44	8	.846	—
Dallas	37	16	.698	7 1/2
New Orleans	32	22	.593	13
Memphis	28	26	.519	17
Houston	25	29	.463	20

Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	33	18	.647	—
Denver	31	23	.574	3 1/2
Utah	31	23	.574	3 1/2
Portland	28	24	.538	5 1/2
Minnesota	13	39	.250	20 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	37	16	.698	—
Phoenix	25	25	.500	10 1/2
Golden State	23	29	.442	13 1/2
L.A. Clippers	20	32	.385	16 1/2
Sacramento	12	37	.245	23

Yesterday's Games

L.A. Lakers 92, Boston 86
Phoenix 112, Golden State 88
Denver 121, Dallas 120

PEBBLE BEACH NATIONAL PRO-AM SCORES

PEBBLE BEACH, California (AP) — Scores Thursday from the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am, played at the 6,816-yard, par-72 Pebble Beach Golf Links (p), the 6,953-yard, par-72 Spyglass Hill (s), and the 6,838-yard, par-70 Monterey Peninsula Country Club (m):

FIRST ROUND

Steve Marino	32	33	-65	-7s
D.A. Points	31	32	-63	-7m
Alex Cejka	31	33	-64	-6m
Tom Gillis	32	35	-67	-5p
Gary Woodland	34	33	-67	-5p
Keegan Bradley	33	32	-65	-5m
Mike Weir	31	37	-68	-4s
Kyle Stanley	31	37	-68	-4p
Rory Sabbatini	33	35	-68	-4s
Nick Watney	33	35	-68	-4p
Aaron Baddeley	34	34	-68	-4s
Bryce Molder	34	35	-69	-3p
Padraig Harrington	35	34	-69	-3s
Vijay Singh	33	36	-69	-3p
Chris Riley	35	34	-69	-3s
J.J. Henry	35	34	-69	-3p
Joseph Bramlett	36	33	-69	-3p
Michael Connell	35	34	-69	-3s
Kevin Chappell	36	33	-69	-3p
Stuart Appleby	36	34	-70	-2p
Andres Romero	32	36	-68	-2m
Hunter Mahan	34	36	-70	-2s
David Toms	34	34	-68	-2m
John Merrick	34	36	-70	-2p
Bill Lunde	35	35	-70	-2s
Chris Stroud	34	36	-70	-2p
Matt Bettencourt	33	35	-68	-2m
Alex Prugh	34	34	-68	-2m
William McGirt	36	34	-70	-2s
Nate Smith	35	35	-70	-2s
Garth Mulroy	34	36	-70	-2s
Billy Hurley III	35	35	-70	-2s
Sam Saunders	35	35	-70	-2s
Robert Garrigus	35	35	-70	-2s
Matt Jones	35	35	-70	-2s
Kris Blanks	36	34	-70	-2s
Jesper Parnevik	33	36	-69	-1m
Kevin Sutherland	33	36	-69	-1m
Tommy Gainey	34	35	-69	-1m
D.J. Trahan	33	36	-69	-1m
Jarrod Lyle	33	36	-69	-1m
Kevin Na	36	35	-71	-1p
Richard S. Johnson	37	34	-71	-1s
Steve Flesch	34	35	-69	-1m
Dean Wilson	36	35	-71	-1p
Brandt Jobe	35	36	-71	-1s
Geoff Ogilvy	38	33	-71	-1s

Note: Due to different par scores, scores are listed in par order.

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HYATT'S

From Page 28

on the turnout, event directors reserve the right to adjust game scoring, accordingly.

Hyatt's Vangi Sablan and NMIVA's Laurie Peterka are coordinating the event.

The 19th Annual Marianas Cup Pro-Am Tournament will

be held at Fiesta Resort & Spa on Feb. 25-27 and also counts as the fourth CNMI National Beach Volleyball team qualifier of the five-leg series.

For more information about the For The Love Of Volleyball and 19th Annual Marianas Cup Pro-Am Tournament, visit www.nmivolleyball.org or contact Peterka at 483-7499.

Northern Passage hits road tomorrow

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



It's all systems go for the 2011 Annual Northern Passage, which will hit the northern portion of the island tomorrow.

The race will begin at 7am in front of La Fiesta Mall with riders competing in the championship, sport, and rookie courses. Registration starts at 6am with entrance fee set at \$20 and \$10 for students and military personnel.

For the championship course, riders will head to Marianas Resort and Spa until reaching the T-intersection. Bikers will then turn right to the coral road near the 1,000,000 gallon water tank, turn left on another coral road, and continue past the FEBC road until reaching the paved road.

From the paved road, riders will climb another paved road to the Kimikaze Trail, pedal through a single track, cross the paved road onto the Autobahn Trail, and turn right on the paved road going to Santa Claus lane. After turning left onto Santa Claus lane, riders must turn right toward Cow Town, pass the old raceway, and turn left onto the trail leading to Banzai Cliff. Bikers will then continue to the Last Command Post.

From the Last Command Post, sport course participants will ride south to return to the finish line, while championship course riders must turn left at the FEBC road, head up to the, and turn right on the coral road all the way back to the 1,000,000 gallon tank. From there, bikers will go down the paved road and turn left to the finish line.

For rookie course participants, they must head right to the Marianas Resort, stay right until reaching the T-intersection at the top of the hill, turn right to coral road, continue to T-intersection (near the 1,000,000 gallon tank), turn left to coral road, turn left to FEBC road, turn left, and head back to the finish line.

Cones and signs will be on the road to guide bikers, while a race briefing will also take place before riders head out to the course.

The top male and female finishers in the championship course will get \$100 each, while medals await the Top 3 placers in the sport and rookie courses.

One Michelob Ultra's new trek mountain bike and free entry to the 2011 Xterra Saipan Championship and Xterra Sport will be raffled off after the race.

Expected to compete in tomorrow's race is Butch Sublemente, who won the championship course of the inaugural race with a time of 56 minutes and eight seconds, beating Tyce Mister (58:57) and Kieran Daly (59:27).

In the women's division, Kimmiko Hasegawa edged Jackie Van Dam with the former timing in at 1:15:29 against the latter's 1:15:43.

Bob Ferrer ruled the sports course with a time 52:26, downing Al Fernandez (57:02) and Florence Antonio (59:25). In the women's division, Maricel Mahilum (1:05:04) finished ahead of Elizabeth Church (1:19:47), and Michelle Duty (1:32:05).

Shogo Ando and Kathy Pagapular topped the rookie course with their times of 25:44 and 47:42, respectively.

Da. Pettis 14, Borja 6, Moore 4, Maui 4, Babauta 2, D. Hofschneider 2, R. Hofschneider 1.

GCA 40 — A. Slas 22, Jones 6, J. Salas 5, Lee 4, Libut 2, S. Kim 1.

Scoring by quarters: 21-4, 35-14, 51-27, 69-36.

Castro 8, Muna 4, Ecalnea 4,



**Kobe rallies
Lakers past
Allen, Celtics**

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Saipan Tribune Sports

28 SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2011

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Tinian, Southern win first playoff games

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Tinian High School and Saipan Southern High School prevailed over separate foes at the start of the playoff round in the varsity division of the 2010-2011 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Boys Basketball League yesterday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The Rays played in the first playoff game and whipped Mt. Carmel School, 69-36, while the THS Stallions zoomed to a similar easy victory over Grace Christian Academy, 62-40.

With their wins, Southern and Tinian advanced to the quarterfinals of the double-elimination playoffs against Kagman High School and MHS, respectively. The Rays and Ayuyu played their quarterfinal match yesterday with Kagman ahead at halftime, 37-27. The complete result of the Kagman-Southern tiff was unavailable at press time. After the Ayuyus-Rays clash, the MHS Dolphins were scheduled to challenge the visiting Stallions for the second semis seat. Winners of the last two games yesterday will square off for the first finals berth today at 8am.

Southern had its first playoff win in the bag as early as the first period with the Rays taking a 21-4 lead. Mt. Carmel faced problems matching up Southern's offense, as the Knights had only three players making it to the scoreboard. Min Seong Kim tallied

22 points for MCS, Reynald Cabalica chipped in 12, and Geza Baka had only two points.

Melvin Cadiang top-scored for the Rays with 16 points, while Jimmy Tudela added 12. Five other Southern players connected on at least two field goal apiece to outgun the Knights. Mt. Carmel has to win against GCA today at 8am to remain in contention.

Tinian, which automatically received the No. 3 seeding in the six-team league due to its unavailability to play in the regular season, made its presence felt in the competition after routing GCA.

Brothers Demetrius and Darius Pettis anchored the Stallions' 22-point win firing 21 and 14 points, respectively.

Following a deadlock at the end of the first period, 10-all, Darius Pettis gave Tinian the driver's seat in the second canto, 24-15, after firing eight of his total points in that canto.

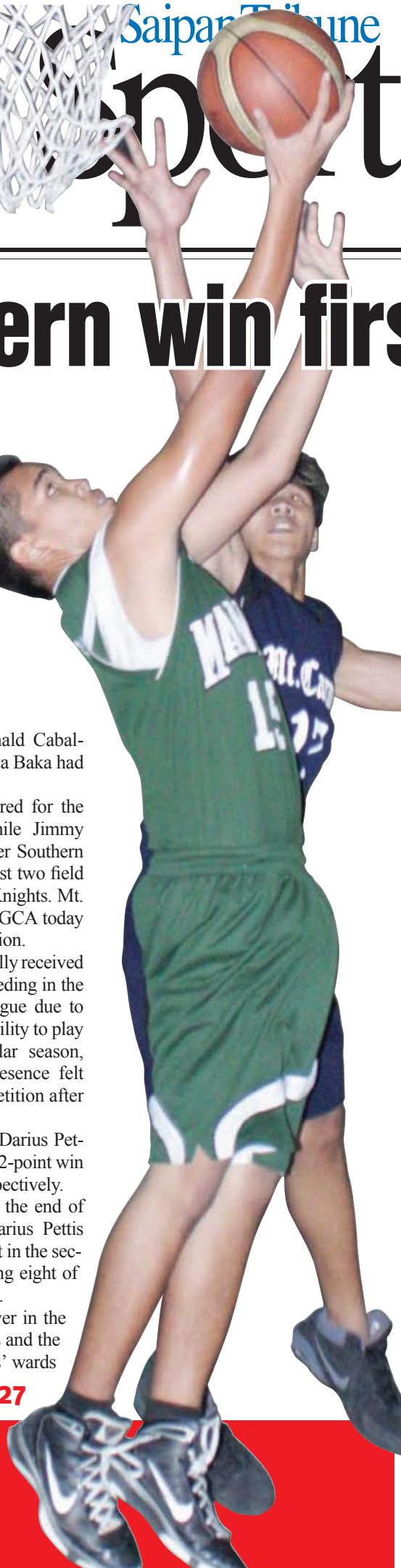
Demetrius Pettis took over in the third, drilling eight markers and the rest of coach Keith Nabors' wards



See TINIAN on Page 27

Saipan Southern High School's Jimmy Tudela goes for a reverse layup against Mt. Carmel School's Jonathan Griffin during their regular season game in the MISO caging at the Marianas High School Gymnasium early this month. The Manta Rays and Knights met anew yesterday with the former winning in the playoff game, 69-36.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



No trash talking for respectful Pacquiao, Mosley

LOS ANGELES— Mutual respect flowed both ways when Filipino Manny Pacquiao and his American challenger Shane Mosley discussed their May 7 WBO welterweight title fight in front of a packed audience on Thursday.

The two fighters are known for their aggressive and entertaining approach in the ring, and also for their reluctance to indulge in the pre-bout trash-talking so common in the sport.

"Manny is a special fighter because he goes out there and he puts 100 percent into what he is doing," Mosley told Reuters after he and Pacquiao held a joint news conference at Beverly Hills Hotel on Thursday.

See NO TRASH on Page 27



Manny Pacquiao, left, of the Philippines, and Shane Mosley pose at a news conference in Beverly Hills, Calif., Thursday, Feb. 10, 2011.

**Marino, Points
atop the
leaderboard
at Pebble**

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**Lady Geckos complete
regular season sweep**

WALTER SUTHERLAND-CEPEDA

Saipan International School's Jessica Soll stops the ball in this file photo from the 2011 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization girls volleyball league. The Lady Geckos swept the regular season with their 10th win Thursday against Marianas High School 1.

By WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

Saipan International School completed a regular season sweep of the Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization girls volleyball league after beating Marianas High School 1 Thursday at the MHS Gymnasium.

The Lady Dolphins made the Lady Geckos sweat it out before nailing their 10th win in as many games.

SIS and MHS 1 battled tooth and nail in the first set that was eventually won by the former, 26-24.

MHS 1, however, regrouped to win the second set easily, 25-16, before the Lady Geckos held on and finished off the Lady Dolphins by winning the third set, 15-13.

On Tuesday, SIS defeated Saipan

Southern High School for its ninth straight win. The Lady Geckos won the first two sets on identical scores of 25-19. They didn't give any quarter to the Lady Manta Rays in the third and won it going away, 15-4.

Southern recovered from its loss to SIS with a win over MHS 2 on Thursday. MHS 2 won the first game, 25-20, but fell to the Lady Manta Rays, 15-25, in the second and lost the tie-breaker set, 12-15.

The Lady Manta Rays finished the regular season at 4-6.

MHS 1 finished in second place behind SIS with a 7-3 win-loss card, but the Lady Dolphins suffered a surprising loss to Grace Christian Academy Tuesday.

GCA downed MHS 1, 25-21, in

See LADY on Page 27

Hyatt's For the Love of Volleyball tips off this morning

By WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The For The Love Of Volleyball beach volleyball doubles tournament kicks off at the Hyatt Regency Saipan beachside today and not Monday as earlier reported.

Organized by Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association with help from the Garapan landmark, the tourney serves as a warm up event for the upcoming 19th Annual Marianas Cup Pro-Am Tournament.

Competition will feature both men's and women's divisions and players must be at least 16 years or older.

The entrance fee costs \$15 for



The tournament will have a double-elimination format.

Players must bring their own partner. Serves must alternate during play. Standard Federation International DeVolleyball two-person beach volleyball rules apply.

Opening rounds will be scored to 15 with a cap of 21, while the semi-finals and final rounds will be scored to 21 with a cap of 25. Depending

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